ENTERTAINMENT/ D4

How 'Maxi' was 'blown up' from digital movie to 35mm film

METRO/ A17

Underpass linking QC Hall and Quezon Memorial Circle to open by June 30

NEWS / A2

President won't intervene in fight over speakership

ACROSS / A15

2 wives of slain politicians win in Eastern Visayas

Tired of cursing potholes? Do what army ants do

ITSA NATIN NAMAMAHALA NG KALSADA

WASHINGTON—ARMY ants tired of potholes take one for the team, throwing their bodies into rough spots to make a smoother road for their sisters, two British researchers reported on Sunday.

TIRED/ A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Tuesday, May 29, 2007 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 170 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Mutual inspiration for Padaca, Panlilio

By Jerome Aning

THEY HAVE NOT YET MET PERSONALLY but Isabela reelectionist Gov. Maria Gracia Cielo Padaca and priest-turned-Pampanga-governor Ed Panlilio have been inspiring each other—through e-mail.

"I'm more happy with your election than

MUTUAL/ A7

GMA accepts NZ offer to help end RP slays

By Michael Lim Ubac

WELLINGTON (VIA PLDT)—President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday welcomed New Zealand's offer to help her administration end a wave of extrajudicial killings as a lone Filipino activist in a steel cage outside Parliament called her the "worst dictator" in Philippine history.

Speaking at a joint press conference with New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark at the start of her two-day state visit, Ms Arroyo defended her record on human rights and claimed her administration was in "a fight to turn around a history of political violence and retribution."

"I welcome our friends in the international community, such as New Zealand, to work with us to erase this legacy of violence and violations forever," the President told reporters.

As Clark hosted lunch for Ms Arroyo, protester Dennis Maga said from his steel cage on Parliament's lawn that he was protesting the "extrajudicial killings in our country and the political persecution of progressive labor representatives."

"We have had 14 presidents ... and Ms Arroyo so far is the worst, of them all for being a dictator and totalitarian ruler," said Maga, a trade unionist who travelled from the Philippines to New Zealand for the President's visit.

About a dozen protesters outside Parliament also held up placards demanding an end to the political killings and the release of Anakpawis party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran, who has been under detention since February last year on charges of inciting to rebellion.

Human rights groups estimate more than 800 people, mostly activists and journalists, have been murdered since Ms Arroyo assumed the presidency in 2001. Many of the killings have been blamed on the Armed Forces of the Philippines, but UN envoy Philip Alston has said the AFP is in "almost total denial" about

GMA ACCEPTS/ A8

President Macapagal does a "hongi" (traditional Maori greeting) with New Zealand warrant officer Doug Wallace. AFP

2 soldiers charged in killing of pastor

PNP admits seizing another churchman in Laguna

By Ephraim Aguilar and Marlon Ramos
Inquirer Southern Luzon
and TJ Burgonio
in Manila

LEGAZPI CITY—MURDER charges were filed on Friday against two soldiers linked to the killing of Methodist pastor Isaias Sta. Rosa in Daraga town in Albay last year, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police said yesterday.

The CIDG filed charges against Maj. Marc Ernest Rosal, Arnaldo Manjares (rank unknown) and 10 still unidentified persons in the provincial prosecutor's office, said Ruben Azañas, CIDG provincial officer.

The charges came as a pastor of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) was seized by police intelligence agents in Biñan town in Laguna on Sunday.

Berlin Guerrero, 40, had just come out of the UCCP chapel in Barangay Malaban at about 5:30 p.m. after leading a worship service when he was forced into a van, said Doris Cuario, secretary general of the militant human rights group Karapatan in Southern Tagalog.

Yesterday afternoon, Karapatan

2 SOLDIERS/ A8

FREE
BERLIN NOW!

MYLENE Guerrero holds up a photo of her activist husband, Pastor Berlin Guerrero, who was reportedly abducted by unidentified armed men in Biñan, Laguna. RAFFY LERMA

Panlilio poll leader killed; vendetta seen

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

GUAGUA, PAMPANGA—FEARS OF AN alleged political vendetta by alleged "jueteng" lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda spread here on Monday after two motorcycle-riding men shot dead a barangay captain who had campaigned for newly proclaimed Pampanga Gov. Fr. Eddie Panlilio.

At the funeral home where the body of village chief Mario "Jomar" Nulud, 48, was taken for autopsy, his friends huddled in circles, talking in hushed tones of their suspicions about the possible role of Pineda—Bubong to them—in the murder.

Senior Supt. Keith Singian, provincial police director, has not tagged any suspects in the assassination of Nulud. The investigation so far has not given clear leads on the identity of the gunman, Chief Insp. Wilson Santos, town police chief, said.

Nulud was the head of Barangay San Juan Bautista, where St. James Church, the parish that Panlilio served from 1999 to March 27, 2007, when he ran for governor, is located.

Reports gathered by police showed that two assailants on a purple Honda

PANLILIO/ A8

Pimentel reclaims No. 12 spot from Zubiri

By Jocelyn R. Uy, Nikko Dizon and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AQUILINO "KOKO" PIMENTEL III, SENATORIAL candidate of the Genuine Opposition (GO), yesterday reclaimed the 12th spot from Miguel Zubiri of Team Unity (TU), restoring the GO's 8-2-2 lead.

When the National Board of Canvassers adjourned its session at 6:30 last night, having read out the vote tallies from Abra, Kalinga and the vote-rich cities of Quezon and Muntinlupa, Pimentel had overtaken Zubiri by 44,144 votes.

The NBC has finished tabulating 88 percent of the 103 certificates of canvass—78 CoCs from the provinces and 13 from Metro Manila.

Zubiri barged into the winning circle after the CoCs from known administration bailiwick Cebu City and Cebu province came in on Saturday. But the certificates tallied yesterday failed to keep him in the Magic 12.

Compared to Zubiri's 318,405 votes from the two provinces and two cities, Pimentel garnered a total of 443,277, with 72 percent of his votes coming from Quezon City.

Overall, Loren Legarda remained at No. 1 followed by fellow GO candidate Francis "Chiz" Escudero. However, Panfilo Lacson (GO) toppled Manuel Villar (GO) from the third spot.

PIMENTEL/ A13

ELEKSYON 2007

COMELEC			NAMFREL		
100% of 164 overseas absentee voters CoCs, 91 local CoCs out of 164 As of 6:00 p.m. May 28			179,655 out of 224,748 precincts As of 5:52 p.m. May 26, 2007		
1	LEGARDA	16,216,636	1	LEGARDA	14,088,197
2	ESCUDERO	16,072,243	2	ESCUDERO	13,838,440
3	LACSON	13,571,718	3	LACSON	11,951,942
4	VILLAR	13,553,491	4	VILLAR	11,609,985
5	PANGILINAN	12,893,299	5	AQUINO	11,041,088
6	AQUINO	12,626,052	6	PANGILINAN	11,035,941
7	ANGARA	10,906,103	7	ANGARA	9,648,879
8	ARROYO	10,387,374	8	CAYETANO, A.	8,970,598
9	CAYETANO, A.	10,278,404	9	HONASAN	8,966,150
10	HONASAN	9,972,516	10	ARROYO	8,928,756
11	TRILLANES	9,630,620	11	TRILLANES	8,657,146
12	PIMENTEL	9,399,672	12	PIMENTEL	8,398,589
13	ZUBIRI	9,355,528	13	ZUBIRI	8,167,850
14	RECTO	9,334,516	14	RECTO	7,947,766
15	DEFENSOR	8,669,982	15	DEFENSOR	7,492,891
16	PICHAY	8,418,095	16	PICHAY	7,378,468
17	ROCO	7,455,119	17	ROCO	6,543,428
18	MONTANO	6,654,899	18	MONTANO	5,974,219
19	SOTTO	6,572,093	19	OSMEÑA	5,696,910
20	OSMEÑA	6,256,574	20	SOTTO	5,584,870

Evidence of cheating in Lanao 'pours like rain'

By Fe Zamora, Cathy Yamsuan, Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Ryan D. Rosauro

MARAWI CITY—THE WATCHDOGS were no match for the cheaters and the just-ended elections here were not only "not credible" but worse than those of 2004—the year of the "Hello Garci" tapes.

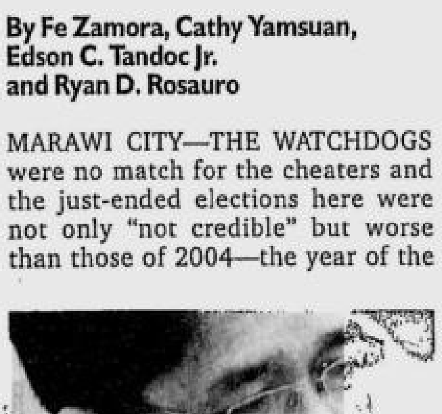
This was how the monitors of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) assessed the regular and special elections held in Lanao del Sur.

Lawyer Hadji Abdullah Dalidig, provincial chair of Namfrel, said yesterday that all forms of cheating—from vote-buying to "*dagdag-bawas*" (vote-padding and -shaving)—had reared their ugly heads again, as they did in 2004, when President Macapagal-Arroyo won the presidential election under allegations she had cheated.

The 2004 allegations became a national scandal with the release of supposed taped conversations between Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano dealing with vote-rigging. Both Ms Arroyo and Garcillano denied they cheated.

Dalidig said in a press conference that the cheats even produced what he called "homemade ERs" or fake election returns (tallies of votes by precinct).

EVIDENCE/ A13



SARMIENTO quits for health reasons.

Sarmiento resigns as task force chief

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Nikko Dizon

THE JOB OF ENSURING CLEAN ELECTIONS in a region that has become known as a center of cheating has apparently taken its toll on Election Commissioner Rene Sarmiento.

Pleading illness, Sarmiento yesterday announced he was resigning as head of a task force set up by the Commission on Elections to investigate vote fraud in Maguindanao in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

On his way back to Manila after supervising the Lanao del Sur special polls, Sarmiento told the INQUIRER that he would personally submit today his letter of resignation as head of Task Force Maguindanao.

Comelec Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer has been designated new head of the task force, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said late yesterday afternoon.

"It's purely for health reasons,"

SARMIENTO/ A13

EZ2
19 16

FOUR DIGIT
4 7 0 8

SUERTRES
Mid-Day 3 2 2
Evening 3 5 9
(All in exact order)

MEGALOTTO 6/45
4 9 14 16 20 42
P10,208,329.20

Second FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Mostly Cloudy
Laoag	Mostly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Mostly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Mostly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Mostly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Mostly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	**Davao**	Mostly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: EDDON SARMIENTO,INQUIRER RESEARCH/05/28/09SOURCE: PAGASA

GMA won't intervene in Speaker's row

By Jhunnex Napallacan and Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO will not interfere in the selection of the new Speaker of the House of Representatives in the 14th Congress, Presidential Management Staff director general Cerge Remonde said here yesterday.

"Malacañang will keep away from that. We respect the independence of Congress. The President will not interfere and will have a hands-off attitude in deference to the independence of the House from the executive," Remonde said.

Congressman-elect Pablo Garcia of the second district of Cebu, who is being touted by some members of the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) party as the next Speaker, also believes President Arroyo will not intervene. Kampi is Ms Arroyo's party.

Garcia, however, said he was not seeking the speakership but simply wanted to be just one of the congressmen in the 14th Congress.

His colleagues in Kampi, however, had agreed that someone other than De Venecia should seek the speakership in order to improve the image of the House, he said.

Garcia said Camarines Sur representative and Kampi president Luis Villafuerte had informed him he was the group's choice to challenge for the speakership.

But the President's brother-in-law, Rep. Ignacio Arroyo Jr. of the 5th district of Negros Occidental, yesterday maintained that he and most of the Kampi members supported De Venecia for Speaker.

Arroyo, the Kampi Western Visayas chair, said Kampi chair Ronaldo Puno also supported De Venecia.

"Chairman Puno and myself are throwing our support behind De Venecia along with most of our members. He (De Venecia) can bring stability to the nation as he has been doing in the past years. He has the experience and there will be more stability in government with him," Arroyo said.

The Kampi solons are set to meet next week to discuss their choice for the House speakership, he said.

Hold it!

Puno yesterday called on the bloc headed by Villafuerte to hold off on moves to deny De Venecia a new term as Speaker.

In a press conference in Camp Crame yesterday, Puno said the party had yet to decide whom to support for Speaker.

But he said that from his discussions with at least half of the Kampi members who won in the last elections, they were "in favor of continuity in the 14th Congress."

In an apparent attempt to consolidate support within the party for De Venecia, Puno said Kampi as a whole "will remain with the administration coalition."

"We will join the majority coalition in determining who the next Speaker will be. We might end up as the minority if we fight over the speakership openly on the floor. This will be odd and strange and people will not accept that," Puno said.

Villafuerte announced Sunday the party was mounting a campaign to deny De Venecia an unprecedented fifth term as Speaker and install Garcia in his stead.

Internal problem

"We still have to discuss and finalize our position. Whatever rumblings against the Speaker will be settled in the party. We hope that this will begin and end as an internal problem of Kampi," said Puno, adding that he will call on his party mates to promote "cooperation instead of confrontation" in Congress.

Puno said he had received some calls from supporters of Garcia in Cebu and Agusan del Norte Rep. Edelmiro Amante exploring the possibility of fielding them for the post of Speaker in the new Congress.

But Puno noted that Kampi would be placed in a "funny situation" of being the minority in Congress if it fielded a candidate for the speakership and lost.

Hypocritical

"It would be hypocritical for us to assume the minority position in the House. This is not the time for the administration coalition to create problems for itself." By Puno's reckoning, Lakas will have at least 83 congressman on its side.

When asked if Villafuerte was just angling for plum positions in the House's committee's, Puno laughed and said "that's natural."

De Venecia heads the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD) coalition, which provided the political vehicle for Ms Arroyo's run for vice president in 1998. De Venecia was then the coalition's presidential candidate.

Key ally

The ruling coalition in the House of Representatives is composed of Lakas-CMD, Kampi, Nationalist People's Coalition, Liberal Party-Lito Atienza group, Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino and the Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas.

While De Venecia is a key ally of President Arroyo, the challenge to his election as Speaker must be "resolved democratically" between Lakas-CMD and Kampi.

Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio made the statement after Villafuerte said Kampi will field Garcia to wrest the speakership from De Venecia.

"It's a new and surprising development," said Claudio, who is also senior deputy secretary general of Lakas-CMD.

Claudio noted the differences in the positions of Villafuerte and Puno. He said the matter needed to be "threshed out and clarified internally first by Kampi."

United legislative front

"Nevertheless, I believe the interests of the administration coalition, including the need to reestablish a united legislative front in support of President Arroyo's political and economic reform agenda, can better be served by having a common candidate for speaker," Claudio said.

But he said he did not think the President knew or gave her blessings to Kampi's challenge to the Speaker. He said the President will not intervene.

"There is a democratic way of handling this," he said.

De Venecia, meanwhile, yesterday dismissed Villafuerte's group in Kampi as a "splinter minority."

He said there appeared to be a crack in Kampi following Villafuerte's announcement over the weekend of Garcia's bid for the speakership.

"It seems there is a splinter group in Kampi that is supporting another in the fight for the speakership. I welcome this development. This is a free nation," he said. *With Alcuin Papa, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Norman Bordadora in Manila*

Canvassing in Kudarat town suspended

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—THE Commission on Elections has suspended indefinitely the canvassing of votes in the remote town of Kalamansig in Sultan Kudarat amid tension created by three political factions bitterly contesting the mayoralty in the town.

Michael Abas, Comelec regional director, told the INQUIRER he was not certain when the canvassing would resume.

Four election officers assigned by the Comelec to direct the canvassing in Kalamansig had resigned one after the other, citing tension and pressure brought to bear by the three opposing camps.

The fifth election officer designated by the Comelec main office in Manila is expected to arrive in this city on Monday.

On Thursday last week, the fourth election officer, also assigned by Comelec Manila, stepped down after a rocket-propelled grenade exploded right in front of the municipal hall where the canvassing was about to begin.

"The immediate area where the canvassing was supposed to be held was well-secured by both police and military officers. However, some bad elements still managed to create trouble," Abas said.

After the explosion, the Comelec office in Manila ordered the transfer of the canvassing from Kalamansig to General Santos, which is about 10 hours by land from the town.

On Friday, the tension increased when the supporters of the three candidates for mayor barricaded the streets to prevent members of the Comelec and the police from taking the ballots out of Kalamansig.

Supporters of the three candidates had been keeping vigil in front of the municipal hall since the start of the canvassing, sleeping in tents erected in the middle of the street. *Aquiles Zonio, Inquirer Mindanao*

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146 - EXCAVATORS
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1992 KOMATSU PC200LC-5 / 1998 CAT 320BL
58 - BULLDOZERS
6.8T HRS ONLY
1 of 4 - CAT D7G WITH RIPPER
41 - WHEEL LOADERS
1993 KOMATSU WA500-1 AVANCE
25 - MOTOR GRADERS
2.2T HRS ONLY
MITSUBISHI MG500S
24 - ROLLERS
1.5T HRS ONLY
13 TONS
2004 BOMAG BW212D-3 COMBI ROLLER
76 - CARGO TRUCKS
1 of 10 - ISUZU GIGA CYM CARGO TRUCK
72 - ALUM VANS
1 of 26 - ISUZU ELF ALUM VAN (Late Model)
23 - WING VANS
1 of 23 - ISUZU GIGA WING VAN
22 - TRAILERS
HEAVY-DUTY 3-AXLE
2007 BRAND NEW MODEL
1 of 8 - KSK 40FT/20FT COMB. FLAT BED/ CONTAINER TRAILER
12 - FIRE TRUCKS
1 of 3 - [illegible] FIRE TRUCK - 1.3KL
3 - AMBULANCE
1 of 3 - TOYOTA HI-ACE 4WD AMBULANCE
139 - CARGOS
1 of 69 - ISUZU ELF CARGO (Late Model)
GENERATOR SETS
VARIOUS 10-220 KVA

'Admin drive vs militant party-lists succeeding'

By Norman Bordadora

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION's bid to halt the forward march of leftists in the House of Representatives has proved somewhat successful, a militant party-list congressman said yesterday.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño told the INQUIRER that his party-list group and its allies in the progressive bloc were way off their target of 10 to 11 seats in the last elections after doubling their representation from three to six in the 2004 polls.

However, Casiño said they still expect to retain their present number of seats and possibly add one more.

Casiño said that based on the recent canvass by the Commission on Elections of party-list votes, Bayan Muna was on a pace to win three seats, Gabriela two and Anakpawis one.

"Anakpawis is still in the fight to get one more seat. Suara Bangsamoro and Kabataan are already way behind," Casiño said.

10 to 11 seats

"Our initial target was 10 to 11 seats. Three for Bayan Muna, three for Anakpawis, three for Gabriela and one each for Suara Bangsamoro and Kabataan," Casiño said in an interview.

Bayan Muna debuted in the House in 2001 as the topnotcher in the party-list polls after Edsa II. It placed three representatives—Satur Ocampo, Crispin Beltran and Liza Maza.

In 2004, the leftist bloc doubled its number of seats to six—Bayan Muna (Ocampo, Casiño and Joel Virador), Anakpawis, two (Beltran and Rafael Mariano), and Gabriela, one (Liza Maza).

Casiño hesitated to admit that what they called the Arroyo administration's vilification campaign against "progressive" party-list groups had succeeded in keeping them from increasing their representation in the House.

'Terrorizing' voters

"They managed to keep our supporters in the countryside communities from voting for us. But the support is still there. We managed to survive," Casiño said.

Casiño said the Armed Forces units in militarized areas were instrumental in "terrorizing" voters to prevent them from writing Bayan Muna on their ballots.

"Our people were being told that if Bayan Muna won in their community, it would be further militarized. They said a detachment would be set up in the area," Casiño said.

Psychological operations

He said such psychological operations and propaganda were conducted in Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, several provinces in Bicol and Eastern Visayas.

"These are the priority areas of the Armed Forces. They are also the areas where we are strong," Casiño said.

Casiño said the Arroyo administration managed to change the landscape of the party-list elections with the entry of alleged administration-backed party-lists.

There was also an unexpected increase in the turnout of party-list votes.

2-percent vote

"The required votes to get that winning two-percent vote suddenly became bigger. Other incumbent party-list groups were also affected," Casiño said.

For instance, Casiño said, Akbayan might lose one of its three seats and Partido ng Manggagawa might lose its lone seat.

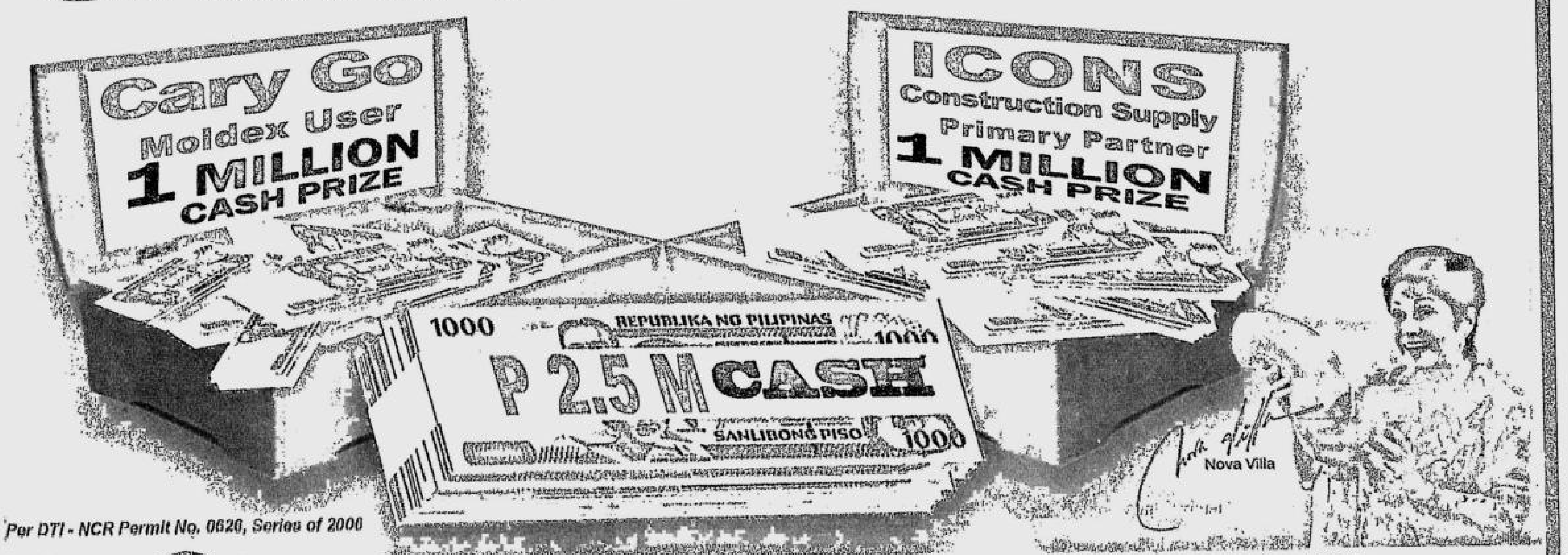
Winning a party-list seat requires getting at least two-percent of all the party-list votes cast. Having six percent or more of the votes cast would give a party-list group three seats.

COMELEC

100% of 154 overseas absentee voters CoCs,
91 local CoCs out of 104
PARTYLIST As of 3 p.m., May 28

1	BUHAY	1,031,179
2	BAYAN MUNA	838,192
3	CIBAC	679,194
4	GABRIELA	511,239
5	APEC	450,969
6	A TEACHER	411,039
7	BUTIL	396,242
8	ALAGAD	385,199
9	AKBAYAN	383,009
10	BATAS	336,955
11	ABONO	331,937
12	COOP-NATCCO	322,742
13	ANAKPAWIS	313,683
14	AGAP	299,944
15	ARC	280,378
16	AN WARAY	263,260
17	FPJPM	239,289
18	KABATAAN	198,150
19	ABA-AKO	192,142
20	ABS	190,441
21	SENIOR CITIZENS	185,929
22	KAKUSA	176,018
23	ANAD	162,932
24	UNI-MAD	162,848
25	VFP	159,732
26	BANTAY	150,479
27	BANAT	150,139
28	ABAKADA	150,049
29	1-UTAK	143,774
30	COCOFED	138,818

Congratulations to our
Grand Draw Winners



Per DTI - NCR Permit No. 0620, Series of 2000

i-MOLDEX mo!
MOLDEX Raffle Promo 2

Bi-Monthly Draw Winners

June 15, 2006 Sta. Ana Manila
LITO VILLANUEVA
GENE FERRER
JOEL MORALES

June 30, 2006 Quezon City
FLOR ARCE
LYS MARKETING CORP.
ROWENA SANTIAGO

July 14, 2006 La Union
LOVELLA CALICA
PHIL. TOPWOOD IND. & TRAD. CORP.
JOSEPHINE OLIBAN

July 31, 2006 Baguio, Benguet
ROGEN PATAWANG
SUNRISE FARM SUPPLY
GERALDINE PUPULING

August 15, 2006 Sta. Cruz Manila
LEYDEN SY
TIM SALES CORP.
ALAINA EMPLEO

August 31, 2006 San Miguel Manila
SANY TAN
TOPLIST TRADING
LOURDES UY

September 15, 2006 Lucena City
CHRISTINA LEE
LUCENA MABUHAY LUMBER
TESS PANTOJA

September 29, 2006 Negros Occidental
LORENZO PACHECO
AVA CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY
MARY GRACE SARMIENTO

October 13, 2006 Tabaco Albay
ROSELLA ANG
NEW TEJA LIGHT ENTERPRISE
RUBEN BELEN

October 31, 2006 Quezon City
AUGUSTO CESAR CENTENO
LYS MARKETING CORP.
ROWENA SANTIAGO

November 15, 2006 Quezon City
IRENE BENIAL
ICONS CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY
DAISY BAHAGA

November 29, 2006 Cabanatuan City
CORAZON MACAPAGAL
CABANATUAN JAC MKTG. CORP.
VIRGILIO SANTOS

December 15, 2006 Quezon City
DIANA CHUA
DUNLOP COMMERCIAL
ANNALIZA SAPITULA

December 28, 2006 Naga City
ELENA DE BELEN
NEW TEAM MDSG. HARDWARE
JIM PULA

January 15, 2007 Tuguegarao City
NANCY TING
TN-G MERCHANDISING
NAPOLEON BANCUD HERNANDEZ

January 31, 2007 Camarines Norte
DANTE VARIN
EMERALD HARDWARE
CRISTINA SANTOS

February 15, 2007 Caloocan City
ISRAEL S. MAXIMO
SABLE CONSTRUCTION SUPPLIES
IMELDA S. HIDALGO

February 28, 2007 Pasig City
PASTOR RIVERA
STATUS BUILDERS
NOWEL CHUA

March 15, 2007 Quezon City
REYNALDO VELA
LYS MARKETING CORP.
MICHAEL LOQUINTO

March 30, 2007 La Union
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Witnesses back out, soldiers give side in Jonas Burgos case

By Alcuin Papa and TJ Burgonio

PLANS TO PUT TWO SOLDIERS suspected of involvement in the abduction of activist Jonas Burgos in a police lineup for identification by witnesses were cancelled yesterday after the witnesses backed out.

Instead, pictures of the two soldiers will be presented to the witnesses for identification, police investigators said yesterday. It was not explained why the witnesses begged off.

However, Director Geary Barias, chief of the PNP's Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM), said five soldiers had finally appeared over the weekend before the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group-National Capital Region (CIDG-NCR) to give their statements.

Burgos, an agriculture trainor and son of press freedom icon Jose "Joe" Burgos, was abducted by eight armed men from the Ever Gotesco mall in Quezon City a month ago. The license plate on the vehicle used to take him away was traced to a vehicle impounded at the 56th Infantry Battalion compound in Norzagaray, Bulacan.

According to investigators, the soldiers—three officers and two enlisted men—denied any involvement in the kidnapping and said they had no idea how the license plate found its way to the vehicle used in the kidnapping.

Lieutenant Colonels Melquiades Feliciano and Noel Clemen, both former battalion commanders of the 56th Infantry Battalion, Lt. Col. Edison Caga, Cpl. Castro Bugalon and Pfc. Jose Villena said the license plate had been either lost or stolen from the Army detachment.

But they could not explain how the license plate of an Asian utility vehicle (AUV) could have been lost while parked inside the 56th IB's camp.

According to Senior Supt. Joel Coronel, chief of the CIDG-NCR, both Bugalon and Villena admitted apprehending Mauro Mudlong, owner of the AUV, in Norzagaray on June 24, 2006, for allegedly transporting illegally cut forest products. They also admitted impounding Mudlong's vehicle which had license plate TAB-194.

But the two also said they never used the vehicle but just turned it over to the 56th Infantry Battalion. Both soldiers said they presumed the vehicle had been there all the while. They also claimed having no knowledge of how the license plates disappeared, Coronel said.

Clemen presumed that it might have been stolen when the entire battalion left the camp for field maneuvers from November to December 2006.

Caga took charge of the headquarters during the period.

The soldiers had been summoned to appear before police investigators last May 21. When they did not report, Barias threatened to cite them for contempt if they did not come before the end of the month.

The leadership of the Philippine Army directed the five personnel concerned to report to the CIDG office in Camp Crame.

All five expressed willingness to submit themselves to further investigation and confront witnesses against them, Barias said.

Meanwhile, the Burgos family complained of harassment.

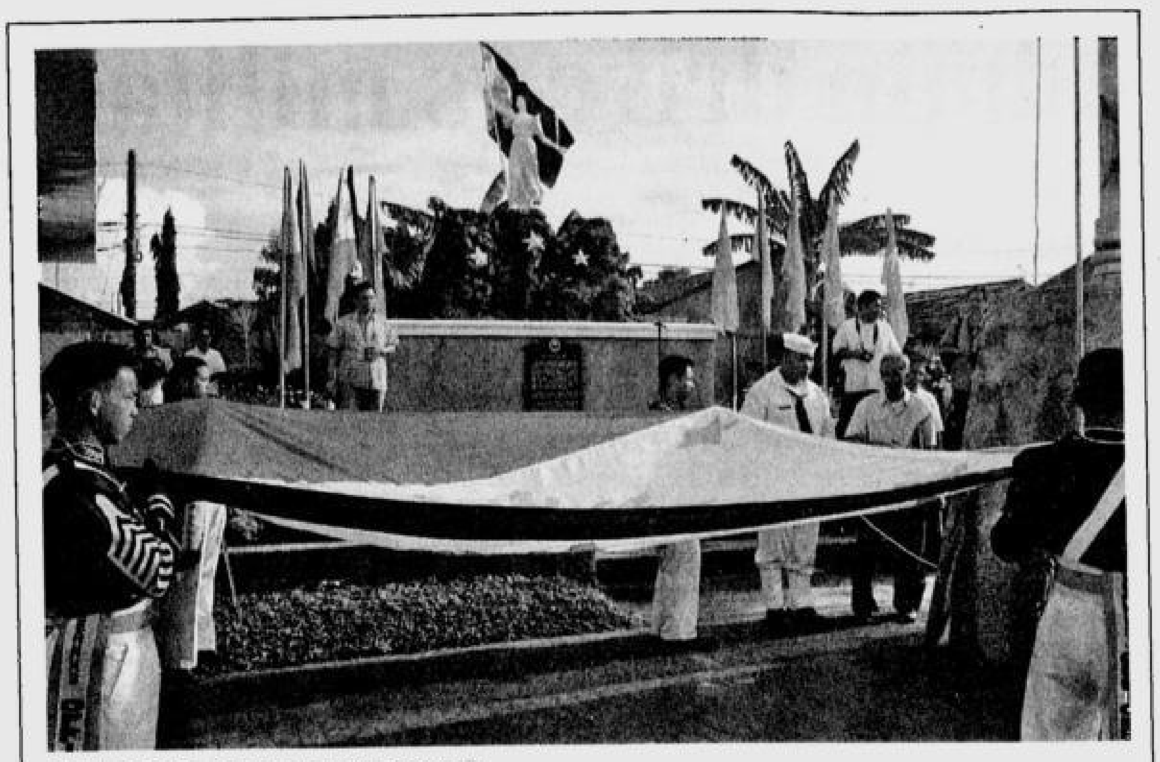
According to Jonas' brother JL, unmarked vehicles would often stop in front of their house and linger for minutes. Apart from this, their phones are also bugged.

"This is harassment," he said.

The family, however, said they remained hopeful of finding Jonas alive amid the support of friends, families of other "desaparecidos," (disappeared) and seasoned human rights lawyers.

The family has attracted a formidable legal support team that now includes former Senate President Jovito Salonga, former Senators Rene Saguisag and Wigberto Tañada, and Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay.

They were among the lawyers who also defended Jonas' father when his critical newspaper, We Forum, was shut down by the Marcos regime in the early '80s.



IN HONOR OF THE FIRST FLAG

A gigantic Philippine flag is about to be raised in Imus, Cavite, in observance of Flag Day yesterday. In 1965, President Diosdado Macapagal declared May 28 of every year Flag Day to commemorate the day in 1898 that Emilio Aguinaldo unfurled the flag for the first time after the Filipino revolutionaries' victory over the Spaniards in the Battle of Alapan. ROGER MARGALLO

RP way behind with regard to women's rights, UN says

By Cynthia D. Balana

DESPITE HAVING A WOMAN president and a woman leading the vote count for the May 14 senatorial elections, the Philippines still has a long way to go in terms of compliance with the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), United Nations officials said yesterday.

Jean D'Cunha, program director of the UN Joint Program to Facilitate the Implementation of the CEDAW Concluding Comments, told a press conference that Philippine laws and policies so far, such as the law prohibiting the trafficking of women, were not sufficient to implement the terms of the convention.

The Philippines is a signatory to CEDAW, also known as the International Bill of Rights for Women.

Cunha said that discrimination against women was still prevalent in almost all layers of Philippine society. Cases of battered women have been reported in the poorest areas as well as among rich families.

Emmeline Versoza, National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) executive director, said that indigenous groups and the marginalized sectors suffered the most in terms of discrimination against women.

Cunha and Versoza were among those who spearheaded the launch of a UN Joint Program—a three-year project funded by the UN Development Progam, United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) and the United Nations Population Fund, with the UN Development Fund for Women as the managing agent—that will assess the progress of CEDAW.

Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral, who presented the country's progress report last year, agreed that despite the strong participation of women in politics in the urban areas, many women continued to suffer from human rights violations.

"We don't notice it here in the urban centers but in the countryside, there are many women whose rights are being abused. We hoped to address this through this program launch," Cabral said.

For its start-up year in 2007, the joint program will be supported with pooled fund contributions totaling $172,000 from UN agencies. Additional support is being organized by the International Labor Organization.

The joint project calls for more policy advocacy, capability-building, and more local and sectoral applications of CEDAW.

"We expect the project to accelerate the promotion of women's human rights in priority areas," said Myrna Yao, chair of the NCRFW.

She identified priority areas as advocacies for the passage of the Magna Carta for Women, and the provision of better access to health, education, credit, justice and political participation by rural women, particularly those in indigenous and Muslim communities.

CEDAW urged the Philippine government to improve compliance by enacting laws that define and eliminate gender discrimination. It urged local executives to include provisions to support women's human rights in national and local plans.

Expect more fuel, LPG price hikes with rise in world prices

By Abigail L. Ho

CONSUMERS CAN EXPECT more fuel and cooking gas price increases next month, as international prices of such products continue to soar, according to an oil industry executive.

Virginia Ruivivar, public affairs manager at industry leader Petron Corp., said that judging from the current trend, motorists could expect more fuel price hikes in the coming weeks, particularly for gasoline products.

"We need to watch where prices will be going in June. We're expecting more increases, especially for gasoline, due to the start of the summer driving season in the United States," Ruivivar told reporters yesterday.

She said that two weeks ago, the price of gasoline in the international market was so high local oil firms had to sell their gasoline products at a loss.

Also, local pump prices had not been reflective of international prices, she said, providing oil firms with little, no or even negative margins.

Apart from gasoline, she said consumers could expect the price of liquefied petroleum gas to rise again next month.

The international contract price of LPG, she said, was estimated to rise by around $25 per metric ton (MT) in June, from the May level of $570.50 per MT.

If this happens, the June contract price would only be less than $30 per MT shy of the all-time high price of $625.50 per MT, which was recorded in February last year.

Ruivivar said the strong peso was the only buffer the oil firms had against escalating oil prices in the world market.

Energy Undersecretary and officer-in-charge Melinda Ocampo said local pump price increases would have been much higher had it not been for the peso's appreciation against the greenback these past weeks.

"We are now in a situation where international oil prices are again reaching historical high levels of more than $80 per barrel. If the peso were not as strong as it is today, the impact would have been much higher," Ocampo said in a statement.

She noted that since the start of the year, gasoline prices had only risen by P2.20 a liter, despite a $20-a-barrel increase in world market prices. The price increase had considered the price reductions that oil firms implemented when world prices took a dip.

Local diesel prices, on the other hand, only increased by a total of P1.20 a liter since the beginning of the year, despite a $10-a-barrel average hike in international prices.

"While we are benefiting from the impact of the stronger peso, we will continue to work with all sectors to ensure that local pump prices fairly reflect international oil price and foreign exchange rate changes. I also appeal to oil companies to effect price increases gradually and only when absolutely necessary," Ocampo said.

First Pinays on Everest to return home to warm, rewarding welcome

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE THREE FILIPINO CLIMBERS—the first women in the world to complete a traverse climb of Mt. Everest and the first women from Southeast Asia to reach the peak—will receive more than fanfare and admiration when they arrive back in Manila on May 31.

Rank promotions await Noelle Wenceslao, Carina Dayondon, Janet Belarmino and their companions at the Philippine Coast Guard, according to the agency's spokesperson Lt. Armand Balilo.

The three women will be promoted to Petty Officer 3rd Class from Seawoman 1st Class, according to Balilo.

Their companions Leo Oracion and Erwin Emata, the first two Filipinos to reach Mt. Everest's summit last year and who assisted the three, will also be promoted to Petty Officer 2nd Class.

Expedition leader Art Valdez will be awarded the Legion of Honor, while the group's physician Ted Esguerra will be awarded the Outstanding Achievement medal.

Balilo said the PCG was preparing a motorcade, a party and an exhibition of the three women's skills along with that of Oracion's and Emata's on June 1.

He said that the PCG might ask Wenceslao, Dayondon and Belarmino to rappel from the MS Philippines, a ship docked in Manila Bay, down to the water. It might also ask Oracion and Emata to descend—on ropes—from a helicopter to a ship.

The three women climbers are scheduled to visit Malacañang with Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza and PCG Commandant Admiral Damian Carlos on June 1. They will also visit Manila City Hall.

The Mt. Everest team will hold a press conference immediately after their arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on May 31 at 5 p.m.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, May 29, 2007
8th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Sir 35:1-12
Gospel: Mark 10:28-31

Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "We have given up everything to follow you." Jesus answered, "Truly, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters, or father or mother, or children, or lands for my sake and for the Gospel, who will not receive his reward. I say to you: even in the midst of persecution he will receive a hundred times as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and lands in the present time and in the world to come eternal life. Do pay attention: Many who now are first will be last, and the last, first."

Commentary

To obey the law, to give alms, and to refrain from evil; to be generous and offer sacrifice—these are the practices of a good Jew living in covenant with the God of Justice. Jesus' words reveal what makes his followers holy, as he is holy. If we sell what we have, give to the poor, store up treasure in heaven (the Body of Christ here on earth), and follow Jesus, we will know God's graciousness even now with 100-fold shared back in brothers/sisters/mothers/homes/property/children, and persecution here, and life that is everlasting in the fullness of God's kingdom. Jesus' wisdom is upside down wisdom: many who are first will be last and the last shall come first. Where do we find ourselves—first/last? What are we giving up, sharing with others?

R. A. Arnaldo Jr.; 79

RAMON "DODOY" A. ARNALDO Jr., former assistant general manager of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, died on May 26 at the age of 79.

He is survived by his wife Estrellita; children Gina and Stella; children-in-law Christine and Bienvenido Policarpio; grandchildren Cesca, Nikka, Michelle and Mikee, and great grandchild Bianca.

His remains lie at Chapel A-1 of the Funeraria Paz new building on Araneta Avenue in Quezon City. The dates of cremation and interment will be announced later.

Corrections

IN THE MAY 28 ISSUE, two stories on Page A2—"Buhay on top of party-list vote count" and "'Politics eating up party-list system'"—erroneously implied that Buhay is the official party-list organization of the religious group El Shaddai. While Buhay has the support of El Shaddai (one of its nominees, Rene Velarde, is the son of El Shaddai leader Bro. Mike Velarde), it is not the official party-list group of the religious organization.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

3 soldiers killed, 3 hurt in battle with NPA rebels

SORSOGON CITY—THREE SOLDIERS WERE killed and three others were wounded Sunday in a four-hour gun battle with communist rebels who had burned a Globe Telecom cell site, military officials said Monday.

Lt. Col. Claudio Yucot, commanding officer of the Philippine Army's 9th Infantry Battalion, said the encounter with around 60 heavily armed members of the rebel New People's Army (NPA) occurred in Barangay Lahong, in the town of Baleno, about 35 kilometers west of Masbate City.

He said the insurgents were armed with high-powered weapons like M-60 machine guns and M-203 grenade launchers.

Yucot identified those killed as Pfc. Exequiel Matucad of Bato, Camarines Sur; Pfc. Domingo Papa of Polangui, Albay, and Pfc. Rocky Gabata of Masbate City while the wounded were Pfc. Exequiel de Ocampo, Pvt. Jerry de la Cruz and Pfc. Ian Solamo.

Lt. Col. Roderick Parayno, spokesperson of the Southern Luzon Command based at Camp Nakar, Lucena City, said this was the same band of NPA rebels that burned and then attempted to bomb a cell site belonging to Globe Telecom on Saturday.

The running gun battle began at around 8 a.m. Although outnumbered, the soldiers tried valiantly to hold their position but the three men fell before reinforcements arrived at noon, Parayno said.

The report said the rebels withdrew towards the northwest, apparently carrying their casualties and wounded based on the traces of blood on the escape route.

After the firefight, the government troops recovered one improvised land mine, firing wire, molotov cocktails, subversive documents and personal belongings.

Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano, Solcom chief, ordered more intensified anti-insurgency operations in Masbate following the series of NPA offensives in the province.

Meanwhile, in a statement sent to the INQUIRER, Greg Bañares, National Democratic Front-Bicol spokesperson, said it was the NPA's Jose Rapsing Command that was behind the ambush. He also said that contrary to military reports, there were four killed on the government side.

TSgt. Armando Escote, noncommissioned officer in charge of the Civil Relations Unit in Bicol, said there had been six clashes between the NPA and government soldiers in Masbate since the last elections. *Bobby Labalan, Delfin Mallari Jr. and Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon and Christine O. Avendaño in Manila*

Pinay UN peacekeeper injured

A FILIPINO WOMAN MEMBER OF THE United Nations peacekeeping force in Timor Leste was injured during a civil disturbance in the capital Dili last week, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

In his report to Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Ambassador Hilaro Davide, Philippine permanent representative to the UN in New York, identified the police officer as Jimeli Valera Acuña, 32, of Taytay, Rizal.

Acuña suffered bruises in the shoulder after being hit with a rock thrown from a crowd of displaced Timorese who had attacked the UN peacekeepers. She was brought to a hospital for treatment.

Acuña is a member of the Philippine police contingent serving with the UN Integrated Mission in Timor Leste (UNMIT).

Davide said the incident took place on May 20 but the Philippine mission only learned of it four days later from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), which reported the incident.

According to the report, the incident took place shortly after UN peacekeepers responded to reports of fighting and stone-throwing between two groups near the former Chinese Embassy in Dili.

Acuña and another Filipino peacekeeper, Joel Doria, the acting police district commander of Dili, were among the first to arrive on the scene and tried to control the crowd.

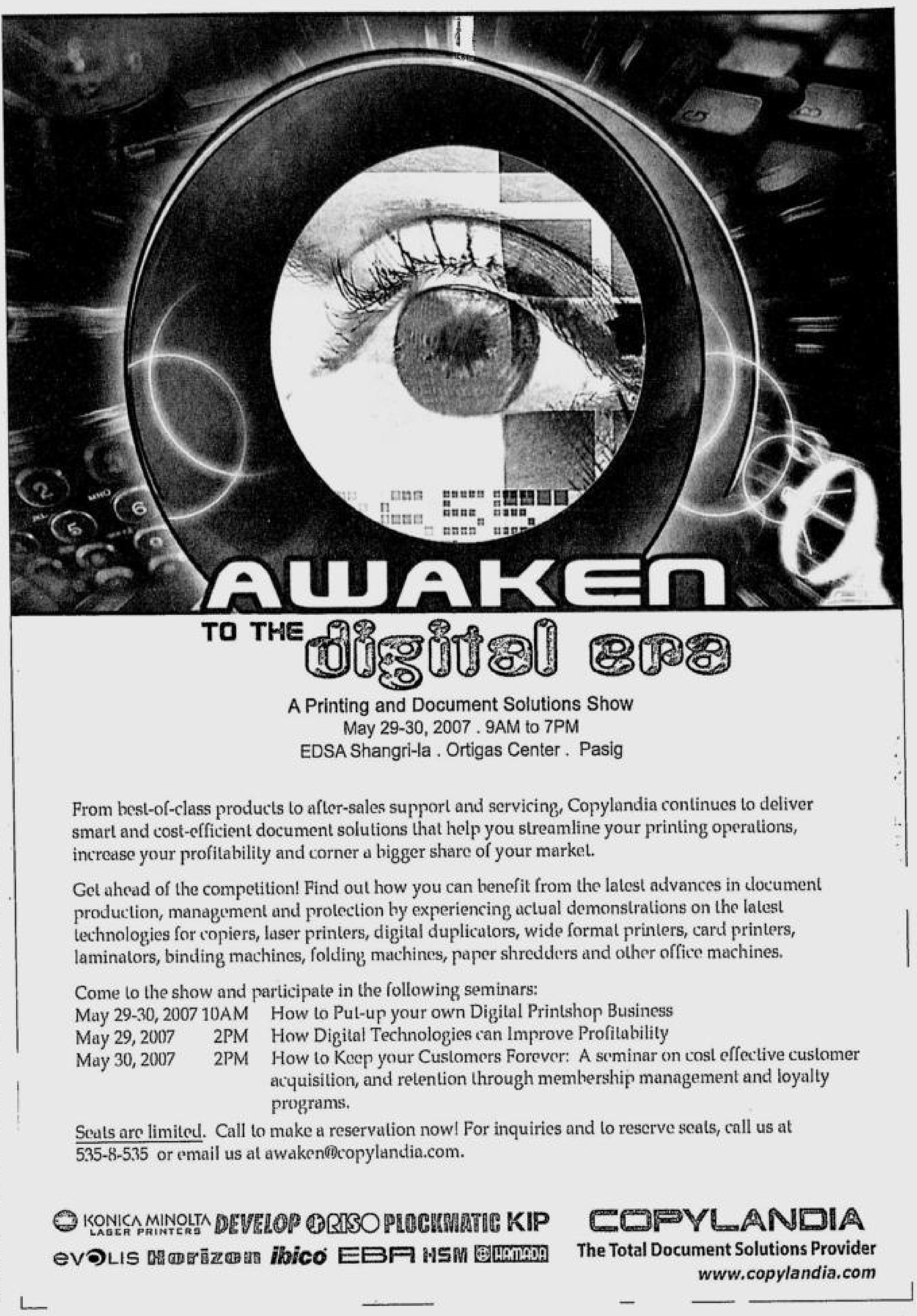
One of the groups, however, turned against the police officers and began attacking them with rocks.

Quoting the DPKO report, Davide said four UN police officers, including Acuña, were injured while four UN vehicles were damaged in the incident. He said one civilian died from a head injury, another was hurt, while 50 were arrested.

This was the second violent incident that resulted in an injury to a Filipino peacekeeper serving in Timor Leste.

Last year, Filipino police officer Edgar Layon was wounded when UN peacekeepers were caught in the middle of a gun battle between East Timorese factions also in Dili.

There are 155 Filipino police peacekeepers serving in UNMIT, whose police component is led by a Filipino, retired General Rodolfo Tor, who sits as a UN police commissioner. *Cynthia D. Balana*



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Mastering the art of taxation

TAXMASTER launch today

WONG GROUP OF COMPA- a deeply rooted and highly regarded company in the industry of business and commerce, will officially launch today May 29, 6 in the evening at Le' Pavillon, Metrobank Avenue corner Edsa extension, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City - its new corporate division - the TaxMaster.

TaxMaster, a tax consultancy firm aimed at helping its clients guarantee their success in maximizing returns of their premiums and to reduce tax burden, is continuously thriving in the corporate-world, giving taxation an unyielding name of integrity and credibility.

TaxMaster is headed by its founder Vicente Wong Sr and its president and CEO Jack C. Wong. It was incorporated in January 1995 and had, since then, survived various obstacles and difficulties posed by global events as well as several other economic and political challenges in the country.

Springing from Master Public Agency, a company servicing the business legal documentations and bookkeeping requirements of a predominantly Chinese-Filipino community up to the year of 1986, Taxmaster is consistent with its mother company's thrust of providing top-of-the-line services to various business agencies and help them adapt to the necessary challenges they may be facing.

TaxMaster essentially builds up systems, policies and procedures so that the companies it is servicing may be able to efficiently and effectively maximize their resources. It also ensures that clients are complying with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Its staff is dedicated to provide accurate, timely and useful information so that they may assist their clients in achieving their objectives.

More than just guaranteeing that monthly account activity reports are well analyzed and validated, TaxMaster takes proper action to correct any offensive charges by implementing the appropriate form and submitting it to their offices. It also assures that all their account activities are kept confidential.

It takes on the responsibility of reviewing all the existing documents and transactions of its clients with regards to their tax liabilities in order to minimize controversies or disagreement with the authorities.

It assesses tax position in order to improve tax practices and procedures on hand and to deal with tax liabilities. The firm also helps in considering tax appraisals which would involve either national or local taxation.

In the hopes of assisting its clients confidently face assessments and interrogations of revenue officers, it provides scrupulously and thoroughly prepared position papers. Moreover, it provides litigation support in the event that its clients' cases need to be elevated to the courts.

TaxMaster also tenders administrative, professional and management services. Other services include accounting and financial management, logistics support, procurement and contracting, program development, implementation and management.

Its main function is to formulate systems and procedures that will help the company reach its corporate goals and objectives and makes sure that these systems and procedures are implemented.

It includes consulting services in the form of discussions, advise-giving, completions, operations, personnel, and other support creation services.

Moreover, the firm offers advice on various tax implications of business transactions and alerts clients on proposed legislative and pertinent developments which will create a business impact.

More than just an agency dedicated to provide the most upright aid on taxation, it is firm on helping companies find out ways of legally and ethically reducing taxes, eliminating the fear of a Bureau of Internal Revenue Audit, and always ensuring business satisfaction in all its endeavors.

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Seh Khay Intertrade Enterprises
WGC Printing & Advertising
Worldnet IT Solution

Messages

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

I am pleased to be a part of the launching of the newest entity under the Wong Group of Companies, the Taxmaster. With this title and name I hope the office will live up to the expectation of the public as to its focus and vision. The Taxmaster is synonymous with the company's commitment to enhance its operations and services insofar as proper taxation and business satisfaction are concerned.

I commend the men and women behind the operation of the Taxmaster, I hope the company will succeed in this undertaking the benefits of which will surely redound to the advantage of the taxpaying public and the government's enhanced system of revenue collection. I look forward to seeing more years of similar aggressive programs from the private sector.

Congratulations.

Thank you.

(Sgd.) GARY B. TEVES
Secretary

Congratulations to the Wong Group of Companies on the occasion of the Launching of TaxMaster, the newest addition to its rooster of firms.

Under the expert stewardship of its President and CEO, Jack C. Wong, TaxMaster will surely flourish in no time, and will surely be able to build up its client base with reputable names in business.

With the innovative, widely-recognized tax administration solution that TaxMaster has to offer, clients can now look forward to a more efficient, highly effective and professional audit system that would significantly increase their productiveness and considerably boost their overall performance.

We in the city government of Makati regard the establishment of TaxMaster in the city as a promising development that augurs well for our current thrust of securing the city a status as the prime investment destination in the country.

Again, congratulations and welcome to Makati!

(Sgd.) JEJOMAR C. BINAY
Mayor-elect, Makati City

We, at the Wong Group of Companies, are all excited to launch the Taxmaster today. We have prepared long and hard, and we cannot wait to see our vision to its fruition.

Taxmaster is a tax consultancy firm aimed at helping its clients guarantee their success in maximizing returns of their premium and reducing tax burden, while giving taxation an unyielding name of integrity and credibility.

Consistent with its mother company the Wong Group of Companies' thrust, it will provide top-of-the-line services to various business agencies and help them adapt to the necessary challenges in the business world.

Taxmaster essentially builds up systems, policies and procedures so that the companies may be able to efficiently and effectively maximize their resources. It also ensures that their clients are complying with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

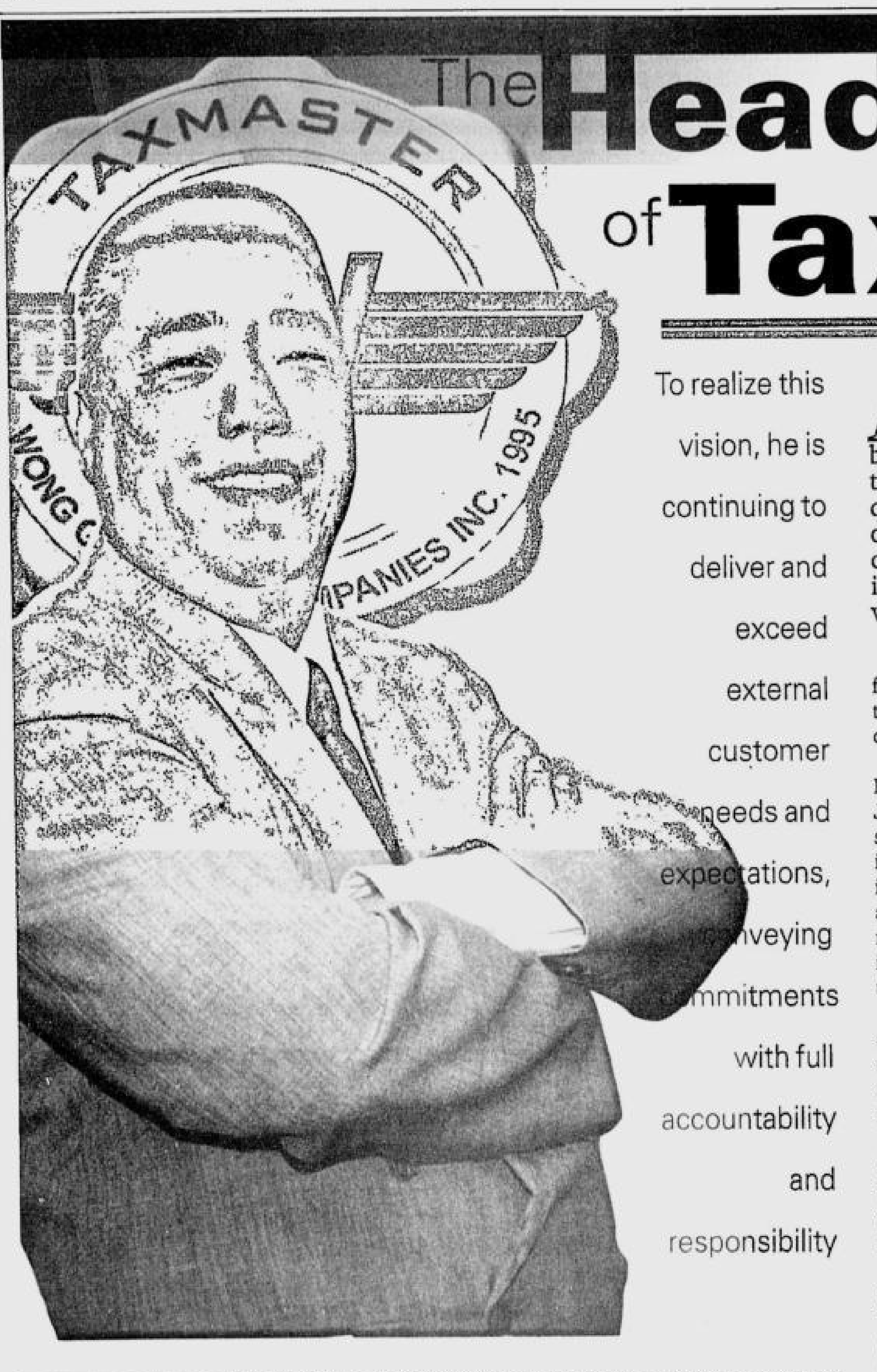
On behalf of the Board of Directors, management committee and all our dedicated staff of Wong Group of Companies, we say thank you for trusting us through the years as we commit ourselves for greater service to the country and its people.

Thank you very much.

JACK C. WONG
President
Taxmaster

JACK C. WONG

The Headmaster of Taxation



To realize this vision, he is continuing to deliver and exceed external customer needs and expectations, conveying commitments with full accountability and responsibility

As taxation plays a key role in supporting the government, the need for careful implementation of tax collection poses a challenge to both private and public firms. Taking a portion of the citizens' wealth is a complicated job that requires justification on the part of the tax payer and careful execution on the part of the tax collector. Because both sides are susceptible to abuse, accounting and tax specialists spring like mushrooms to aid various parties in all their tax concerns.

Among them has been Jack Wong, son of respected taxation figure Vicente Wong Sr. Continuing a legacy of credibility in taxation that his father had started, he was able to lead his family's cluster of companies to high pedestals.

A graduate of Xavier School and a holder of a Masters Degree in Business Management at Murdoch University Perth, Australia, Jack Wong now has extensive knowledge in the field of tax consultancy, real estate industry, business management, and marketing research. Backed up by several years of experience in managing their businesses here in the country, not to mention, finishing a masters degree abroad, he has created a vast client-base and dynamic contacts which the company can easily tap. The innate spirit of entrepreneurship within Jack Wong surfaced and showed through his efficient management of the tax services enterprise.

Wong wants the company "to become the preferred professional business and tax consultancy service provider to a globally competitive client base through the participation, involvement and its key people, thus enabling the organization to fulfill its humanitarian role and share the blessing from society."

To realize this vision, he is continuing to deliver and exceed external customer needs and expectations, conveying commitments with full accountability and responsibility. He employs processes, systems, and procedures that provide clear directions and results for the benefit of their customers.

Wong also makes sure that there is utmost respect for individuals and that his employees' achievements are recognized, which is why he makes it a point to reward deserving staff for their responsible participation in achieving clients' objectives, and that's in addition to the importance he gives to teamwork, cooperation, and close identification with customers.

Fortified with the right ideologies and customer-driven outlook, Jack Wong got on further by intensifying the horizons of the Wong Group of Companies.

Incorporated in January 1995, Wong Group of Companies is envisioned to expand to different industries that would complement the diversified and related objectives of the head firm.

The firm has been into the field of Tax Consultancy and business management services since the late 1940s when its precursor company, Master Public Agency, was founded by Vicente Wong Sr. Since its inception 50 years ago, the firm has endured the challenges of time. It has already made its mark in the field of tax consultancy and tax audit, which is very much supported by its abiding clients and the business community as a whole.

Catalyzed by the father and son tandem, other companies such as Worldnet Achievers Consultancy Co LTD, Wong's Multiresources, Wong & Associates Worldnet Information Technology Solutions, Worldnet Business Center, Seh Kay Intertrade Enterprise, and Taxmaster, among several others, followed.

With Jack Wong at the helm and Vicente Wong as his most prized advisor, the Wong Group of Companies shall incessantly continue developing new avenues in business which will help perk up its ever increasing roster of clientele.

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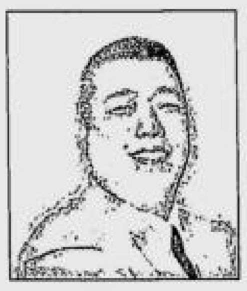
of the Board



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While focusing for the basic needs of the Filipino through well-managed enterprises, the Wong Group of Companies demonstrated that private business have mutually serve the aspirations of shareholders and the needs of the society.

"To be responsible to our publics, beyond managing business well, we also contribute to the society by helping the least of our neighbors help themselves, through the Wong Group of Companies Foundation, Inc."

Jack C. Wong

Mutual ...

From page A1

with my reelection. Your victory inspires me," Padaca said in her e-mail to Panlilio, a copy of which she shared with the INQUIRER.

The e-mail, dated May 19, was sent the day after Panlilio was declared the winner of the Pampanga gubernatorial race.

"You have really inspired me and your people have inspired our Kapampangan," the Catholic priest replied. "You trail-blazed, and then we followed your lead. We thought, all the while, if Isabela could do it, we can do it, too."

Panlilio, whose election was viewed as "miraculous" by many people, defeated two of Pampanga's most powerful politicians, Mark Lapid and Lilia Pineda.

Padaca's first election as governor in 2004 spelled the end of the Dy family's 30-year grip on Isabela politics.

The two governors are expected to meet for the first time at a press forum this morning in Quezon City.

In a discussion with INQUIRER editors and reporters on Saturday, Padaca said Panlilio's organized campaign was the key to the priest's election. "He had more open supporters, unlike me in 2004," she said.

Better equipped

Moreover, Panlilio was also "better equipped" to be governor owing to his experience as the social director and administrator of a parish, added Padaca, a former radio announcer.

She first heard about Panlilio and his campaign against "jueteng" when she spoke before the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines' plenary assembly in February.

Panlilio's name was mentioned in connection with efforts of the election watchdog, Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting, to keep the coming polls clean, she said.

When Padaca learned that Panlilio had filed his candidacy, she got his number and sent him a text message wishing him well.

The priest welcomed her support and called her his inspiration.

Being Christian

When the Isabela governor sent her congratulatory message to Panlilio, she included a personal comment on the priest's victory.

"I perfectly understand the reason you ran for governor. Sometimes, you just feel strongly that you have to do one thing and you will never have peace unless or until you do it," she wrote.

Pandaca said Panlilio's candidacy was one way for people to show their Christianity by forgetting about their own comfort, their security and their convenience.

One common problem the two governors would be grappling with in their areas is jueteng.

Padaca admitted that she was not very successful in ridding Isabela of the illegal numbers game during her first term because many of her mayors refused to cooperate.

According to her, the national leadership does not have enough political will to curb jueteng. She herself has been trying to get the mayors to commit to her antigambling drive.

However, she said any talk about eradicating jueteng often ended up alienating the mayors. This was complicated by the fact that she also had a hard time influencing mayors who were loyal to the displaced political dynasty of Isabela.

"We don't talk about jueteng so we can talk about other things. I also need their cooperation in other areas, such as agriculture, integrated land management, job generation and local tourism," Padaca said.

Microfinancing

The Isabela governor, however, said she was sure Panlilio would be more successful in the antijueteng crusade.

She added that she had found in Panlilio, the grassroots-level solution called microfinancing, which she plans to offer as an alternative livelihood to people dependent on jueteng operations

"Father Ed has many microfinancing projects which gave the Kapampangan an alternative means of livelihood. I would like to have that in my province as well," Padaca said.

Malacañang yesterday denied it was meddling in the gubernatorial race in Isabela between Padaca and three-term Gov. Benjamin Dy.

Presidential political adviser Gabriel Claudio said it was "implausible" for Malacañang to intervene on behalf of the Dys because no less than stalwarts of the administration parties Lakas-CMD and Kampi were supporting Padaca.

With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana and Tarra Quismundo

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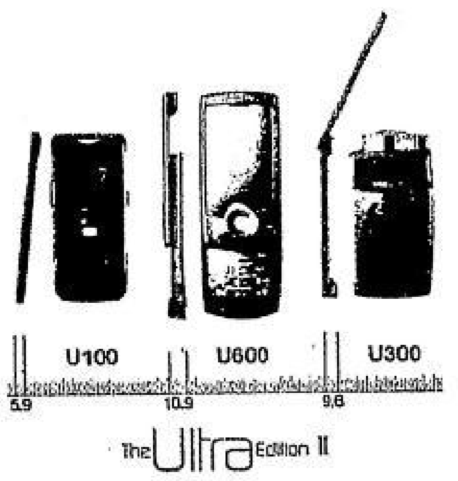

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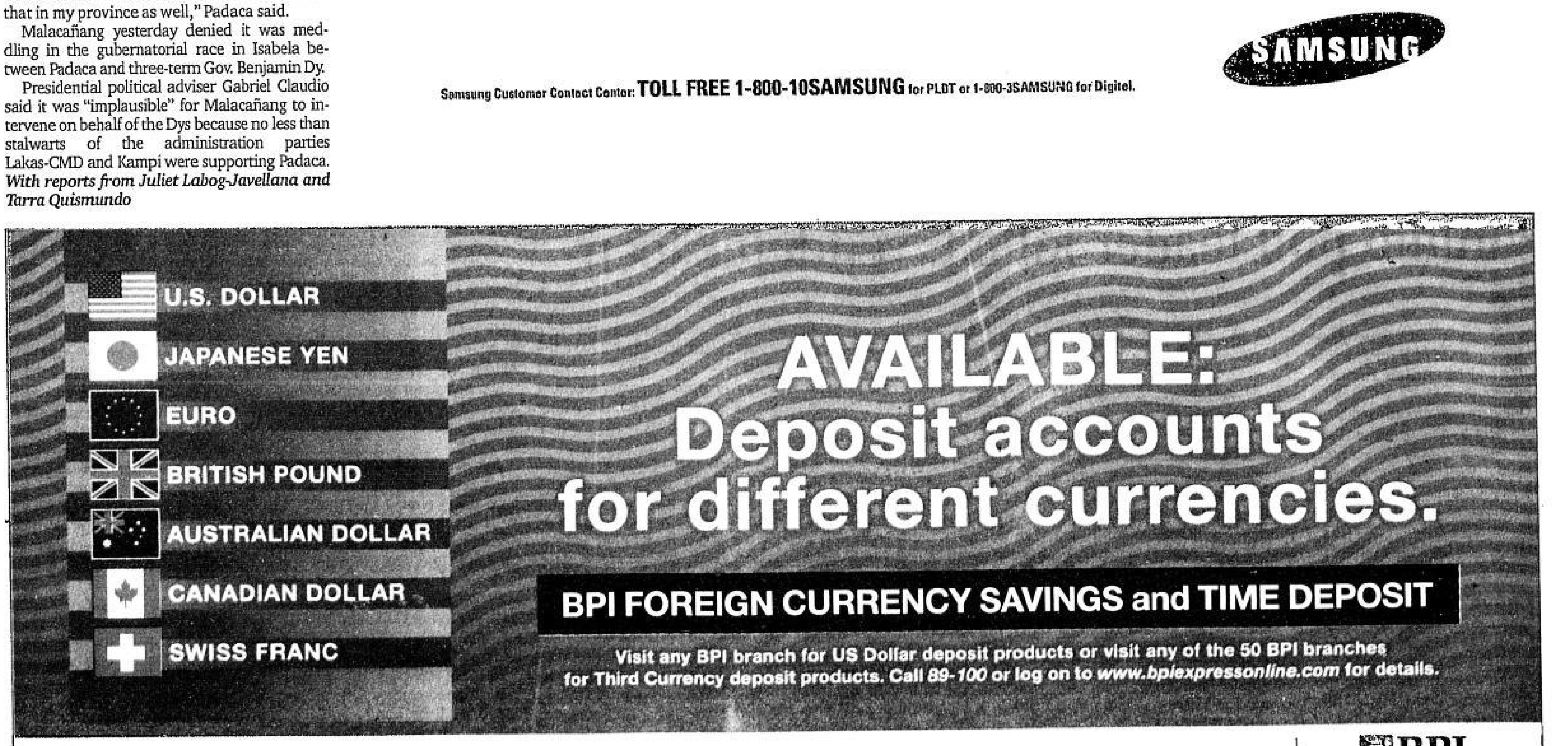

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New Zealand welcomes skilled Filipino workers

By Michael Lim Ubac

WELLINGTON (VIA PLDT)—New Zealand is opening its doors to skilled Filipino workers.

New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark yesterday announced at a joint press conference with President Macapagal-Arroyo that Wellington was seeking to expand diplomatic and trade ties with Manila to include allowing Filipino workers to find jobs and even migrate to this southern archipelago.

"The Philippines is important to us economically. It is New Zealand's 12th biggest market in the world," Clark said at the start of Ms Arroyo's two-day state visit.

Clark said the proposed free trade agreement between New Zealand, the Philippines and Australia "currently being negotiated may help open more doors, particularly in the areas of services and investment."

"We are short of skilled workers here, so we appreciate an increased flow of people to our country," Clark said, pointing out that from only 898 Filipinos who had secured migrant status from 2004 to 2005, the number has risen to 2,435 in 2006.

Clark hailed the rapid growth of the Filipino community in New Zealand—now over 20,000 strong. "In my experience, they are hardworking and friendly, and they are proud ambassadors for their country," she said.

She said tourism between New Zealand and the Philippines also had great potential for growth with the approval of a proposed air services agreement between the two countries. Currently, there are no direct flights from anywhere in the Philippines to New Zealand.

Clark said her country was looking for new areas of cooperation, such as in energy and technology, reforestation and in the development of the Philippines' dairy industry.

GMA accepts NZ offer . . .

From page A1

the situation.

Human rights training

Clark said New Zealand would help the Philippines by providing human rights training to institutions like the police and military. When Clark visited the Philippines in January, Ms Arroyo asked her for technical assistance to solve the killings and for cooperation between their respective human rights commissions.

During the joint press conference, Ms Arroyo said she had created a commission headed by a former Supreme Court justice to look into the killings.

"We've established special courts for prosecution; we've allocated more money for investigators. We're introducing new laws to protect witnesses. We've also ordered new investigative units for investigating and prosecuting these crimes with much greater results than before," she said.

"We have a number of accused behind bars. We've had some convictions, we've had a few acquittals and we have the soldiers who have been accused facing court-martial," the Philippine leader added.

In reply to a question raised by a New Zealand journalist, Ms Arroyo said Beltran's case was being dealt with according to the law and his human and civil rights were being upheld.

She said the Philippines shared the values of democracy, social justice and human rights with other democratic states.

Maga, however, said Ms Arroyo's words about protecting human rights were not backed by action. "Being the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, I think she is the one to blame," he said.

Ms Arroyo and Clark witnessed the signing by Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Calderon and his New Zealand counterpart, Howard Broad, of a law enforcement cooperation agreement to combat transnational crimes, including drug and people trafficking, money laundering and terrorism.

Ms Arroyo and Clark, along with Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and Indonesian Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda, will attend the opening of the interfaith dialogue in the northern town of Waitangi on Tuesday.

The annual dialogue, involving regional academics and religious leaders, was set up to find ways to reduce religious conflict following the 2002 Bali bombings. *With reports from AP and AFP*

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark hold a press conference following their meeting at the Parliament House in Wellington.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

2 soldiers charged in killing of pastor

From page A1

said it had located the pastor.

Guerrero, a former secretary general of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Southern Tagalog, called up his wife at around 4 p.m., saying he was in Camp Gen. Pantaleon Garcia, the Cavite police headquarters in Imus town.

At least 25 church people, including 10 pastors and priests, were among the 864 activists summarily executed since President Macapagal-Arroyo took office in 2001, according to the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) and Karapatan.

Bicol accounted for more than 140 of the killings.

As of May 15, 196 activists were missing, according to Karapatan.

The killings drew condemnation from international groups and countries, prompting President Macapagal-Arroyo to form a commission to look into the murders. The Melo Commission largely blamed the killings on the military.

CIDG provincial officer Azañas said the Firearms and Explosives Office in Camp Crame, the PNP headquarters, had verified that the .45-cal. pistol recovered from the scene of Sta. Rosa's killing was registered to Manjares, who hails from Barangay Bibingkahan, Sorsogon City.

Robbery charges

The CIDG is preparing robbery charges against the suspects.

Evidence gathered by the 12-member team from the United Methodist Church last year pointed to soldiers of the Army's 9th Infantry Division as being behind the killing of Sta. Rosa, a member of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Bicol.

The pastor was tied and shot by 10 masked men on Aug. 3 outside his house in Barangay Malobago in Daraga. His body was found beside a stream not far from his house.

Near him lay a dead man wearing a bonnet, black shorts and rubber shoes. Police identified him as Army Cpl. Lordger Pastrana.

Army ID, mission order

Among the items recovered from Pastrana were an identification card showing that he was a member of the 9th ID based in Pili, Camarines Sur, a .45-cal. pistol, a mission order and a cellular phone allegedly taken from Sta. Rosa's house.

The mission order, dated July 11, 2006, was to expire on Sept. 30, 2006, and was signed by Rosal, according to the NCCP in its report titled "Let the Stones Cry Out: An Ecumenical Report on Human Rights in the Philippines and a Call to Action."

Sta. Rosa's younger brother, Jonathan, identified Pastrana as one of the assailants who barged into their house at 8:30 p.m. on Aug. 3, 2006.

Forced to admit as rebels

Before he was taken to the pastor's house, Jonathan said the armed men forced him and another brother, Ray Sun, to admit that they were members of the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Jonathan said the intruders seized him, bound his hands and took him outside. Later, he said, he heard gunshots.

Karapatan welcomed the filing of the murder charges. But Joel Montas, Karapatan-Albay coordinator, said his group would still have to see the evidence gathered by Task Force Usig, the PNP group assigned to look into the killings.

MISSING
MISSING
FREE

MYLENE Guerrero (right), wife of abducted Pastor Berlin Guerrero, leads a rally in front of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in Quezon City.

RAFFY LERMA

Montas said Karapatan was also preparing a case against the suspects, but Task Force Usig was the first to file one.

"We will see how the evidence we have gathered could still help in the prosecution. It is the obligation of Task Force Usig to handle these cases. However, this time it will be Usig against people in uniform," Montas said.

He said Karapatan had obtained the sworn affidavits of four witnesses who lived in the village where the crime took place.

It was the second time in five years that soldiers were charged with murder for the murder of activists in Bicol. The first was in 2002 in connection with the murder of youth activist Joel Asejo.

One of the eight accused is still detained while the rest are at large and have gone absent without official leave from the Army.

Van blocked

Supt. Joselito Esquivel Jr., Biñan police chief, said Guerrero was on a tricycle with his wife and their three children when a white Mitsubishi L300 van blocked their path in front of a gasoline station in Barangay Casili.

Esquivel said Guerrero's abductors were escorted by another group in a white van.

The abductors took the personal belongings of Guerrero's wife, including her mobile phone, a laptop and the money offerings of the church members during the worship service, he said.

Quoting witnesses, Cuario said the vehicles had no license plates while Guerrero's abductors "looked like soldiers."

One of the assailants even pistol-whipped the pastor, he said.

Cuario said the incident came almost two months after two pastors were forcibly taken by still unidentified men outside a UCCP seminary in Dasmariñas, Cavite, on March 29. The abductors released the victims the next day "after they realized that they got the wrong persons," he said.

'After Ka Berlin'

"They were really after Ka Berlin," Cuario said.

In a mobile phone interview, Senior Supt. Fidel Posadas, Cavite police director, said his men arrested Guerrero on the basis of two warrants of arrest for inciting to sedition and murder.

Posadas belied the claims of militant groups that the pastor was abducted. He said the arrest was legal and covered by a court warrant.

He, however, declined to give the details on the cases against Guerrero. "We only have copies of the warrants of arrest. Maybe tomorrow, we can get the copies of the case folders."

Posadas assured the family and colleagues of Guerrero that the pastor was in good condition.

Death anniversary

Guerrero, his wife and their children were on their way to Calamba City in Laguna to attend a program to commemorate the first death anniversary of murdered UCCP Pastor Noli Capulong.

Capulong, coordinator of the party-list group Bayan Muna in Southern Tagalog, was gunned down by motorcycle-riding men in Barangay Parian in Calamba on May 27, 2006. His murder remains unsolved.

The abduction of Guerrero was condemned by a network of Protestant churches, human rights groups and families of missing activists.

"What's happening is systematic," Bishop Eliezer Pascua, UCCP general secretary, said at a joint briefing with church officials and the Guerrero family at the UCCP headquarters in Quezon City.

"This just goes to show that our members are highly persecuted," Pascua said.

The UCCP believed the abduction was part of the "ongoing crackdown" on militants and activists.

Bayan, the Promotion of Church People's Response, and the Union Theological Seminary of the Philippines, where Guerrero is enrolled as a student, also decried his abduction.

Marie Hilao-Enriquez, secretary general of the human rights group Karapatan, said the abduction was shameless because it happened during the Week of the Disappeared.

"It's as if the government is taunting us because this happened during the Week of the Disappeared," she said in a separate briefing at a restaurant in Quezon City.

Less than 24 hours after he went missing, the pastor called his wife yesterday afternoon to tell her he had been taken to the police camp.

"I'm happy that he's alive," Mylene said in a phone interview. *With reports from Jaymee Gamil and Niña Catherine Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Panlilio poll leader killed; vendetta seen

From page A1

motorcycle without license plates stopped in front of Nulud's house on the old MacArthur Highway, Santos said.

One drove the motorcycle, the other held a .45-cal. pistol. Both wore caps.

Nulud was tending to his garden when the attack was carried out. Neighbors said they heard at least five gunshots.

The killers sped off southward toward nearby Bacolor town.

No witnesses

"There are no credible witnesses. (Nulud's neighbors) either ducked for safety or ran away from the scene or they were too far to see the faces of the suspects," Santos told the INQUIRER.

Records at the Diosdado Macapagal Provincial Hospital's emergency room showed that Nulud took three shots in the left side of the upper body—the heart, chest and stomach.

He was killed a week after reports circulated that Pineda had been calling several barangay captains to meetings to make them explain where they spent the money he had given them and why they failed to make Lilia win.

Lilia rebutted these reports, saying her husband was "not a bad person."

About five village chiefs reached for interviews confirmed that they were called to meetings. Three said those were simply for assessment, not to account for the money given them.

Pineda, 57, could not be reached for comment on the Nulud killing.

Panlilio defeated Pineda's wife Lilia in the May 14 election by a margin of 1,147 votes.

The INQUIRER called Lilia several times on Monday but her mobile phone was off. Her son Dennis, the reelected mayor of Lubao town, begged off from making further comments.

"My parents are hurt by the nasty rumors," he said.

Pineda has built a reputation of being a "political kingmaker" in Pampanga. He has allegedly funded the campaigns of local, as well as national, candidates. Some politicians spoke of him with mixed awe and fear for his supposed political clout.

Singian said there had been "false reports" about the killings of barangay captains in Guagua, Floridablanca and Mabalacat.

"There seemed to be an effort to sow terror," he said, adding that the rumormongers were being traced.

So far, the confirmed incidents involved the killing of Benigno Sigua, a village chief in Mabalacat on May 23, and the ambush try on Fernando Santos, a village chief of Jalung, Porac, on May 21.

These, said Singian, were not election-related.

Panlilio's lawyer, Dante David, said Nulud was one of two village chiefs in Guagua's Betis area who "openly campaigned" for the priest.

David said reports reaching him had it that Nulud's killing "appeared to be a form of political retribution."

"Based on reports that I got from the field, there seemed to be a witch-hunt against those who were given money but failed to deliver (votes for Lilia) or against those who campaigned for Among Ed (Panlilio). I won't rush into judgment yet," he said.

But Nulud, he noted, belonged to the last group.

David urged Panlilio's supporters to "take extra precautions."

Panlilio called Nulud a "friend of long standing."

Kampi candidate

"I feel sad, sad but definitely Jomar made a statement that he endorsed my candidacy," the Catholic priest told the INQUIRER.

"I don't really know if there's a political vendetta but here are the facts: Jomar belonged to the [Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino] when he ran for municipal councilor. Lilia dropped him from the slate when he campaigned for me."

Reelected Mayor Ricardo Rivera confirmed that Nulud ran for councilor under the Kampi.

"He did not formally resign but when he stopped joining us in the campaign and because it did not look good in the eyes of the people that as Kampi we endorsed Nanay (Mother) Lilia and he was for Among Ed, we decided to set him free," Rivera said.

"It is not true that Lilia ordered him dropped from the slate," he added. Nulud's name, however, was not included in the party's sample ballots, he confirmed. Nulud lost in his bid.

Nulud, according to Panlilio, was an "advocate of good government."

"He followed the Local Government Code (Republic Act No. 7160). He held barangay assemblies twice a year. After Masses, he reported the activities and accomplishments of the council or held consultations or asked the residents if they could suggest programs they want to be done in the barangay," Panlilio said.

Nulud also chaired the parish's zero waste management program called the Linis Betis Movement.

Police have tightened security on Panlilio, Singian said.

Rene Romero, chair of the Pampanga Chamber of Commerce and Industry and supporter of Panlilio, said the group was "alarmed and disturbed" by Nulud's murder, other violent incidents on village leaders and the rumors about the supposed political vendetta.

"These might scare investors away. Business should move forward after the election," Romero said by phone.

For giving customer wrong pill, Mercury Drug ordered to pay up

By Leila B. Salaverria

SEBASTIAN BAKING WENT TO A MERCURY Drug branch in Alabang, Muntinlupa City, to buy Diamicron, an anti-diabetic medicine, in 1993. Instead, he was given the sleeping tablet Dormicum.

On his third day of taking the medicine, he fell asleep while behind the wheel of his car and collided with another vehicle.

His doctor, Cesar Sy, checked the tablets Baking was taking and was shocked to find out that they were sleeping pills.

Baking sued the drugstore which sold him the wrong medicine and, last week, the Supreme Court ruled that Mercury Drug Corp. was "grossly negligent" and should pay Baking P50,000 in moral damages and P25,000 in exemplary damages.

The high tribunal affirmed a 2002 Court of Appeals ruling in favor of Baking, but reduced the moral damages and did away with the awarding of attorney's fees and litigation expenses granted the plaintiff.

Mercury Drug had earlier questioned the appellate court's decision.

However, the Supreme Court said drugstore employees should exercise the highest degree of care and diligence in dispensing medicine, considering that people's health and safety were at risk.

"Obviously, petitioner's employee was grossly negligent in selling to respondent Dormicum, instead of the prescribed Diamicron. Considering that a fatal mistake could be a matter of life and death for a buying patient, the said employee should have been very cautious in dispensing medicines. She should have verified whether the medicine she gave respondent was indeed the one prescribed by his physician," the high court said in its May 25 decision.

It also junked Mercury Drug's contention that Baking's own negligence caused his car accident.

"Here, the vehicular accident could not have occurred had petitioner's employee been careful in reading Dr. Sy's prescription. Without the potent effects of Dormicum, a sleeping tablet, it was unlikely that respondent would fall asleep while driving his car, resulting in a collision," the high tribunal said.

It, however, ruled that instead of the P250,000 in moral damages awarded to Baking by the Court of Appeals, he should only get P50,000 because such damages should be commensurate to the injury he suffered.

It awarded Baking P25,000 in exemplary damages to serve as an example or a correction of public good, adding that Mercury Drug should be more meticulous given the sensitive nature of its business.

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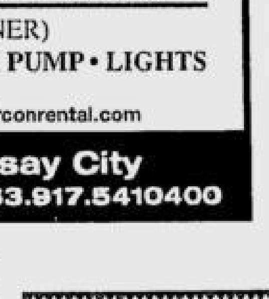

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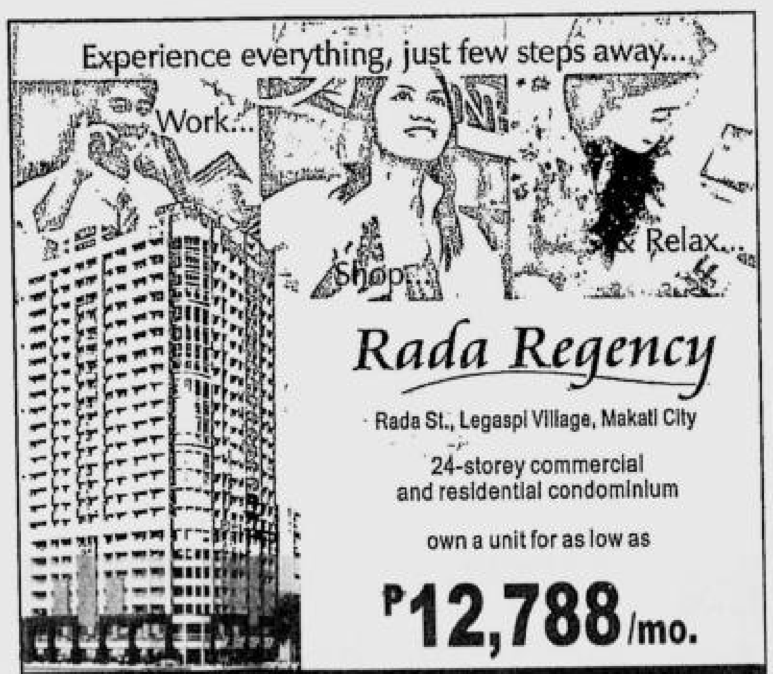

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
MICROSOFT PHILIPPINES, INC. 17/F 6750 Ayala Office Tower, 6750 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Hong Thiam Ong	Business Controller
DOW CHEMICAL PACIFIC LTD. 23/F 6750 Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Fernando B. Teixeira	Project Engineering Associate
IP CONVERGE DATA CENTER INC. 34/F Tower 2, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave. Makati City	Oleen Miranda Stone	Vice President for Organizational Development
HINDUJA TMT, LTD. No. 86 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Brgy. Ugong Norte, Quezon City	Vinu Sukumar	Operation Manager
FORMOSTAR GARMENTS (PHILIPPINES) CO., INC. 105 Marcos Alvarez Ave., Talon, Las Piñas City	Chin-Lin Chen	Production, Planning, Inventory & Control Manager
FORMOSTAR GARMENTS (PHILIPPINES) CO., INC. 105 Marcos Alvarez Ave., Talon, Las Piñas City	Ta-Sheng Pan	Quality Assurance Manager
[illegible]OUR WANNABE INC. [illegible] Financial Center Bldg., Macapagal Blvd., Pasay City	Boungkil Shin	General Manager
ANDREW (PHILIPPINES), INC. Unit 907, Antel 2000 Corporate Center, 121 Valero Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City	Randall Mark Laughter	Director Satcom Sales-Asia Pacific Region
TAKE ADVANCE TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATION, INC. Rm. 1505 City & Land Mega Plaza, ADB Ave. cor. Garnet Rd., Ortigas, Pasig City	Naohiko Kohashi	Operation Manager
PEOPLESUPPORT (PHILIPPINES) INC. PeopleSupport Center, Ayala cor. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	James Louis Barbieri	Program Director
DOW CHEMICAL PACIFIC LTD. 23/F 6750 Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Don Thomas Meddick	Senior Process Automation Specialist
NARA 9 NETWORK SYSTEM, INC. 101 Quirino Ave., Baclaran, Parañaque City	Sang Bog Choi	General Manager

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

The DOLE conducts free seminar on Labor-Human Relations and Productivity. For more information, please call 339-2013 & 303-5920.

(PDI-May 29, 2007)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632)920-6401*(632)920-6446
E-mail: member_relations@sss.gov.ph *
Website: http://www.sss.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

IAEB No. 2007-024 - Goods

Bulk Purchase of Supplies and Materials
for the 1st Semester of CY2007
Non-Impact Printer (NIP) Consumables
(Negotiated Purchase After Two (2) Failed Biddings)

1. The *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM*, through the Office Services Department Bulk Purchase intends to apply the sum of **P2,325,807.30** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Purchase of Supplies and Materials for 2007 1st Semester Bulk Purchase Requirement – NIP Consumables.
2. The *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for Supplies and Materials for 2007 1st Semester Bulk Purchase – NIP Consumables. Delivery of the GOODS is on a staggered basis but not to exceed three (3) months after the signing/receipt of purchase order. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, Instruction to Bidders (ITB).
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section I of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure, on a per item per category basis.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8 AM TO 5 PM.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **P2,500.00**. The method of payment will be on a cash basis, payable at the SSS Cashiering Department, SSS Main Bldg. Ground floor, upon accomplishment of SSS Form R-6. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *June 08, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.* at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Building on *June 22, 2007 not later than 2:00 p.m.*. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in a form and amount indicated in the Bid Tender Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on *June 22, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.* at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the given address.
9. The *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Bids without offering any reason, waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

Bid and Awards Committee
The Secretariat
6th Floor, SSS Main Building
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel # 922-2991; 924-7380; 920-6401 local 5491
Email – bac@sss.gov.ph
Facsimile number – (02) 924-7380

THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI – May 29, 2007)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Republic of the Philippines

SECTION I. INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

XA/21 SCADA/EMS ON-SITE WORKSHOP FOR EMS SITE SPECIFIC DISASTER RECOVERY (PB070302-AA026(PB2) PR#SCD-06-0023031)

1. The *NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, Head Office Region* (TRANSCO-HO) through the *2007 Corporate Budget approved by the TransCo Board* intends to apply the sum of **Php 3,190,500.00** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *PR No. SCD-06-0023031/XA/21 SCADA/EMS ON-SITE SPECIFIC DISASTER RECOVERY*. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *TRANSCO-HO* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the *XA/21 SCADA/EMS ON-SITE SPECIFIC DISASTER RECOVERY*. Delivery of the GOODS is required ***15 days after receipt of Approved Purchase Order.*** The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from **May 22, 2007 to June 20, 2007** at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of ***Php 1,500.00***. The method of payment will be ***Cash***. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The TRANSCO-HO will hold a Pre-Bid Conference to all interested parties on **June 6, 2007 / 10:00 A.M.** at the address below. *Request for clarification on the bid documents should be submitted before the pre-Bid Conference.*
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **June 21, 2007 / 10:00 A.M.**
7. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following forms and amount or equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

FORM OF SECURITY	AMOUNT
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit (1%)	Php 31,905.00
2. Bank Guarantee (1.5%)	Php 47,857.50
3. Surety Bond (2.5%)	Php 79,762.50
4. Foreign Government Guarantee (100%)	Php 3,190,500.00

8. Bid opening shall be on **June 21, 2007/10:00 A.M.** at the *Admin Conference Rm. same address below.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The ***National Transmission Corporation*** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Raul Joseph G. Seludo, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg.
NPC-OBC, BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (632) 9812206 / Fax No. (632) 9228432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) RAUL JOSEPH G. SELUDO
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI – May 29, 2007)

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Justice for Ma'am

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO LAST SATURday extolled the heroism and hard work of more than half a million public school teachers in the May 14 elections. She said: "Our teachers truly are heroes—not only those who died and were hurt in the defense of the vote but also all the half a million [teachers] who served in more than 200,000 precincts around the country."

That is fine as most rhetoric goes, but she could go beyond words and show by her deeds that she really considers the teachers who not only worked long hours but also put their lives at risk on election day as genuine heroes. For starters, she could order the entire criminal justice machinery to throw the book at a police inspector and seven other suspects accused of setting fire to a school used as a voting center in Taysan, Batangas. The mastermind should also be arrested and tried.

In the fire, three persons, including Nellie Banaag, a teacher who served as a member of the board of election inspectors, were killed. Banaag was so severely burned her casket had to be sealed and covered with a white cloth. Her husband and five children did not even get to view her remains.

The Government Service Insurance System and the Department of Education gave about P600,000 in life insurance, survivorship assistance and other benefits to Banaag's family. The Pinagbayanan Elementary School where she died will be named after her after it is rebuilt. But all these will not bring her back, nor will it satisfy the need to exact retribution from her killers. Justice has to be meted out to the perpetrators, and meted out quickly.

INQUIRER columnist Ceres Doyo recalled that several years ago, a teacher who tried to protect the ballot, Filomena Tatlonghari, was also killed in Batangas. A school building was named after her. When a teacher is killed, Doyo wrote, "I imagine a huge sheltering tree being felled. It comes down with a monumental thud, shaking the forest ground and making the other trees sway and tremble. So many living things are orphaned by the falling of one huge tree."

Similarly, the death of a teacher affects not just her family and friends, but a huge circle of people—hundreds of students, and hundreds or probably even thousands of yet unborn pupils who would have benefited from her teaching. We would not mourn the deaths of traditional politicians who created the mess the nation is now in. We would not grieve over the demise of some Comelec commissioners who made a shambles of our electoral process. But we would certainly mourn the death of teachers who are responsible for shaping the minds of our children.

The gruesome death of Banaag in a fire brings back to mind the image of the bloodied body of Moises Padilla being cradled by then-Defense Secretary Ramon Magsaysay. In 1951 Padilla invaded the territory of Gov. Rafael Lacson, the undisputed boss of Negros Occidental, and ran as the opposition candidate for mayor of Magallon. Lacson told Padilla to drop out but he did not heed the veiled warning.

Padilla was arrested, tortured and killed by Lacson's armed followers. Magsaysay formed an elite group of Marines, flew to Negros Oriental, carried Padilla's body out of the Padilla home and brought it to Manila. Magsaysay later said, "When I carried Moises' dead body, I was carrying the dead body of Philippine democracy." He subsequently had Lacson arrested, together with several Negros Oriental mayors and the gunmen. They were quickly tried, found guilty and sent to jail.

In the elections of 1969, the residents of Ora Este and Ora Centro in Bantay, Ilocos Sur voted against Gov. Carmeling Pichay Crisologo who was running for reelection. Crisologo was reelected but one of her sons, Vincent "Bingbong" Crisologo, decided to get back at the villagers by ordering gunmen to set the villagers' huts on fire. An old woman, Vicenta Balboa, died in the fire.

The villagers fled to Manila and sought refuge inside UP Diliman. Legislators, the media and street demonstrators accused Marcos, who was running for reelection, of coddling a "warlord." Stung to the quick, Marcos dismissed the Philippine Constabulary command of Ilocos Sur and directed the Department of Justice to assign the best prosecutors to handle the case against Bingbong. Crisologo and his goons were subsequently tried, convicted and imprisoned.

The Padilla and Crisologo cases showed that public outrage, unrelenting media coverage—and political will—can bring even the most powerful political personalities to justice. Can the Arroyo administration produce a similar result in the Banaag case?

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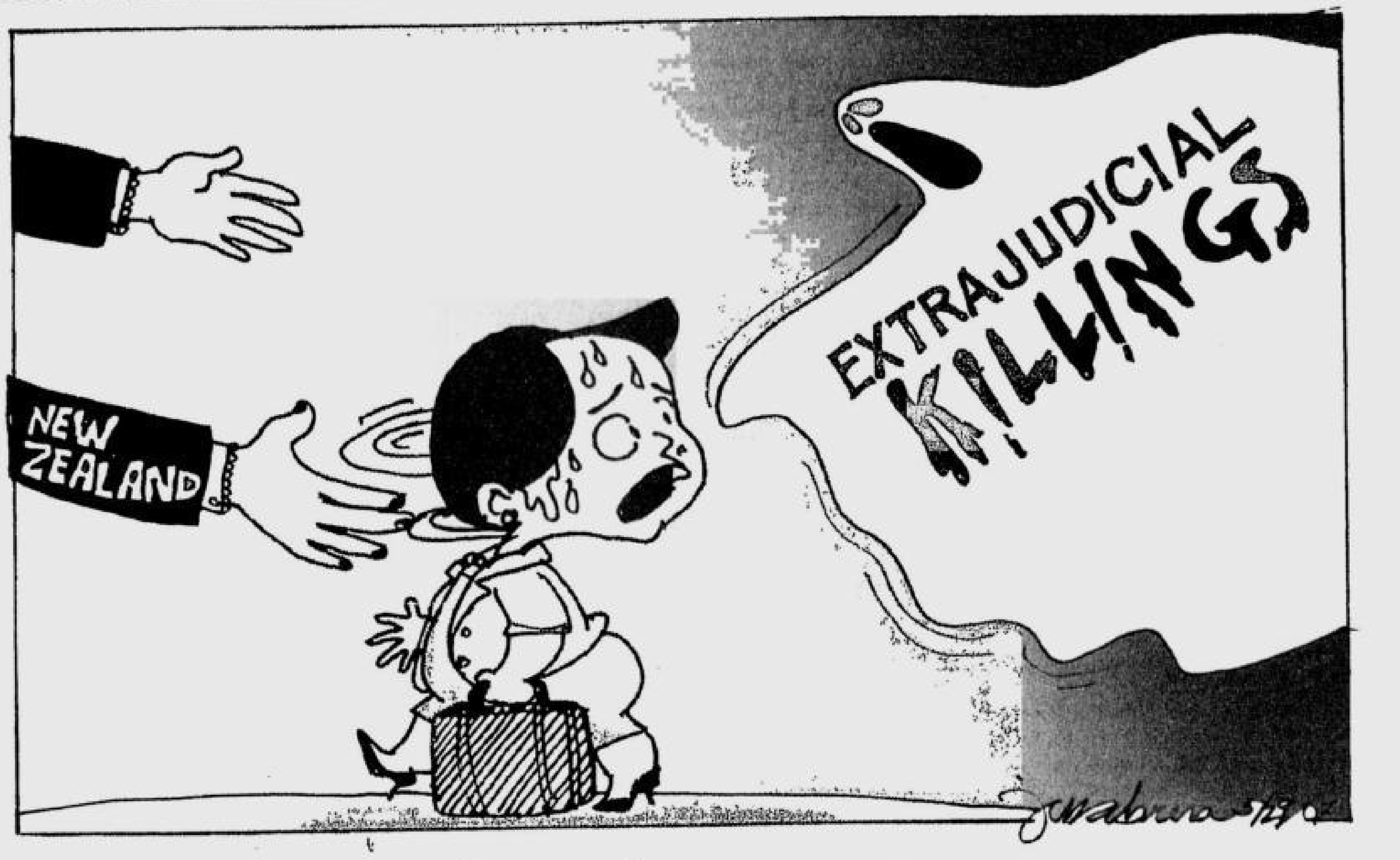

Powerless power

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"A GOOD WOMAN IS WORTH MORE THAN rubies," says a Pampango proverb. It came to mind when the junta in Burma (Myanmar) stretched, without even pretense of due process, the detention of Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi for another year.

She won 82 percent of the vote in her country's 1990 election. For that "felony," Burma's generals serially imprisoned her for over 17 years now.

"In this Orwellian state with tea shops ... local people never mention Ms Suu Kyi by name," BBC's Kate McGeown writes. "They just call her 'The Lady.' (It is) a term of deference towards a woman whom many Burmese, probably the vast majority, believe is the rightful leader of their nation."

Detained in her lakeside Yangon home, the Oxford-educated Suu Kyi has not seen sons Kim and Alexander for years. Fearing she'd be exiled, she didn't attend her husband's funeral in Britain. Her bugged telephone is disconnected. Her doctor's visits were whittled down to once every two months. "A more accurate description ... would be home solitary confinement," the Observer notes.

Thus, she could not receive, from the European Parliament in 1990, the Sakharov Prize and the Rafto Human Rights Prize, as well as the Nobel Peace Prize a year later. The last time Yangon allowed a UN special representative to visit was in 2005.

Yet, the helpless "Lady" stills sends shivers up the spines of a military dictatorship that has handcuffed Burma for four decades now. The 63-year-old widow is an "outstanding example of the power of the powerless," Nobel chair Francis Sejested noted.

Filipinos know how it is to be kicked around: by Spanish oppressors, Japanese kempetai, Marcos' thugs. That seared a "preferential option" for the underdog into our psyche. And our often-blurred national memory includes that of marching behind the widow of an assassinated leader in the teeth of repression.

"Some leaders are born women." This country has been graced with radiant leaders. Among the more prominent were Doña Aurora Quezon, war heroine Josefa Escoda, Supreme Court Justice Cecilia Muñoz Palma and graftbuster Haydee Yorac.

Equally heroic but less known, others were shown in this week's news photos: Muslim public schoolteachers, in head scarves, guarding ballot boxes in Lanao del Sur as did their Christian counterparts in Taysan's burnt precinct. They resemble the "Lady" who "remains the main symbol of resistance in Burma."

The junta, meanwhile, pressures Suu Kyi supporters by threats, like banning their children from school. All political activity is proscribed. The press is censored. Asean and the international community were conned with a "seven-stage road map to democracy." Not a single stage has been completed.

Ms Suu Kyi's current four-year detention petered out May 26. But Friday's extension would make that five years. This sparked clenched-teeth fury from the international community: Association of Southeast Asian Nations members, the European Union, the United States, even as China murmured unconvincingly about "non-interference."

On behalf of the 27-member EU, current president Germany condemned the arrest extension. "All international appeals ... have once more gone unheard. Myanmar demonstrated persistent unwillingness to engage all political and ethnic forces of the country in a genuine dialogue to bring about true national reconciliation and establishment of democracy." That was a pointed reference to the unimplemented road map.

Earlier Suu Kyi releases, as "in July 1995, after six years of detention and house arrest, were a sop to the outside world," John Aglionby of the Observer wrote earlier. "In reality, it was a tactic to delay introducing meaningful democratic reform." Now, the junta doesn't even bother with sops.

That ratchets pressure on Asean, usually circumspect about poking into internal affairs of fellow members. Blatant Burma repression forced Asean to innovate ways to tell this rogue member to shape up. Thus, the Philippines chaired the Asean Summit this year, as criticism shoved Burma out of its slot in the rotating chairmanship.

Philippine Foreign Undersecretary Erlinda Basilio and Indonesia's Imron Cotan flayed continued Suu Kyi detention in a Manila meeting. But Malaysian opposition leader Lim Kit Siang went further, saying Asean's policy of "constructive engagement" with Burma has collapsed.

Burma should not be allowed to continue as "a millstone around the neck of Asean, bringing disrepute," he said. Asean should now "face up seriously to the option to suspend or expel Myanmar."

At their Cebu meeting in January, the Eminent Persons Group submitted an Asean Charter draft. There's no word "sanction" in that document, Undersecretary Basilio notes. "It enshrines duties and responsibilities."

Burma's continued repression, however, means it rejects Asean ideals. It is, in effect, self-expulsion. That would outpace Asean's legal debates. Also, kicking out the junta would do justice to what the Nobel citation said: 'Suu Kyi's struggle is one of the most extraordinary examples of civil courage in Asia in recent decades."

* * *

E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com

More shafts of light

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

AS I WRITE THIS ANTONIO TRILLANES IS still in 11th spot. And barring the kind of last-minute pulling-the-rabbit-out-of-the-hat trick they did three years ago, he will probably manage to cling there to the end. He was somewhere in the 8th-9th spot earlier, but that was probably before Benjamin Abalos' messengers of death managed to convey their message of death to the counters in desolate places. Trillanes will need his friends in the military and elsewhere to be most vigilant in this desperate hour.

Frankly, I did not expect him to do as well as he did. That he has done so is instructive in the extreme.

When (I will not say "if") Trillanes is proclaimed senator next month, he will have succeeded in bucking the odds. I don't know which was the longer shot—mounting the Oakwood mutiny or running for senator. At least, looking at both events before they happened and not from hindsight, his running for senator seemed the longer one. The Oakwood mutiny had more chances of success, given the pledges given by various military officers that they were solidly behind it. Pledges that were never delivered. No such assurances were there as Trillanes prepared for this other battle.

That Trillanes (like Sonia Roco) managed to be a candidate of the GO to begin with was already a minor miracle. That of course caused much dissension in the ranks, which led to some un-anointed Erap supporters leaving in pique and going to the other side—not easy to call that side the Dark Side, with Erap as point of reference; maybe the Darker Side. But from hindsight, Trillanes' (and Roco's) inclusion in that eclectic assortment of heads proved hugely inspired.

A couple of factors, I thought, worked heavily against Trillanes. The first was that the voters might distrust a "coup plotter" or "military adventurist"—that was how his enemies kept calling him—turning politician. I thought Gregorio Honasan, who had blazed that trail, and who had figured prominently in the news just a few months ago being caught in spicy circumstances, couldn't be good advertisement for it. That Honasan himself is there in 10th spot above Trillanes also sends a clear message, one Malacañang can't be happy about. But I'll get to that.

The second obstacle was that Trillanes tends to intellectualize, to talk to the head rather than to the heart. While that may be good for academic-type forums, that is not good for getting votes. I know Trillanes, I've spoken to him several times. High-minded and idealistic, he puts his points across well, but in strongly political or ideological terms. That is to say, in a highly abstract way rather than by way of images or stories. That is not the language of elections. That is a recipe for suicide in elections.

When I heard him in a TV debate last month talking about his agenda in that fashion rather than highlighting the drama of being in prison while campaigning, I thought to myself: *Sayang*, another opportunity lost. In fact I thought to myself that if his handlers had any sense, or an ounce of his audacity or daring, they would advertise him in posters behind bars wearing regulatory prison uniform with his number on it. Candidates look all their lives for a "Moises Padilla" image or moment, here Trillanes had one ready-made for him and they were frittering it away. Moises Padilla, for those who have not heard of him, was a murder victim whose dead body Ramon Magsaysay cradled in his arms before photographers. The image catapulted him all the way to the presidency.

Yet despite all this, Trillanes is in the magic circle. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out what to make of this. If any proof was needed about what this election was all about, and what humongous opportunity the opposition missed (it could have swept the field), this one supplies it. This referendum was first and last a referendum on GMA. The opposition might not have grasped it, but the voters did. Instinctively, desperately, angrily.

As a corollary to this, Trillanes was first and last a referendum on the coup or "withdrawal of support" that has been contemplated or executed against GMA. Trillanes represents more than the Oakwood mutiny, he represents the whole gamut of extrajudicial action against an extrajudicial ruler. His, and not Honasan's, is the face that attaches to those actions, including the one Danny Lim is accused of fomenting last year. He is the embodiment of the Military Rebel, the uniformed ideological twin of the political activist, who would use his arms (his Magdalo friends expressly articulate it thus) for the people and not against them. Hermogenes Esperon supplies the opposite, the face of Marcos', and now, GMA's military, a face hitherto worn by Fabian Ver.

I did say in a column shortly before Lim's "withdrawal of support" last year that if a coup ever took place against GMA, it would be the most popular coup in the world. Unlike other coups, it would not be a sudden blitzkrieg carried out by a few men, it would be an open uprising with a whole nation in tow. Unlike the coups mounted by Honasan against Cory, it would not meet with a pooled editorial by the newspapers condemning it, it would be met with open arms by the Edsa forces. Indeed, unlike other coups, it would not be a coup to end all coups, it would simply be a coup to end one very particular and real coup.

That never took place, or it was aborted. But what the public as citizens could not do in the streets, the public as voters has been able to do in the polling booths. That is why Tol is *putol*, the *pichay* is rotting on the vine, and Trillanes is thrilling to the clarion call of the Senate.

It's enough to make you believe there's still a God in heaven.

Leadership challenge in the House

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE MARGINS SEPARATING THE LAST THREE senatorial candidates in the Magic 12 as well as those in 13th to 16th place remain so minuscule that it's difficult to predict the final outcome of the senatorial race at this point, when several millions of votes are still to be counted. The way things are, Genuine Opposition candidates Antonio Trillanes and Aquilino Pimentel III could be dislodged by Team Unity's Juan Miguel Zubiri, who has been weaving in and out of No. 12 in the Comelec and Namfrel counts, and Ralph Recto, once the votes from Maguindanao are in; or vice versa. The final tally could settle at a 6-4-2 count in favor of GO or even tie GO and TU at 5-5 with two independents.

* * *

What it all shows us is that something's got to be done with the counting. Recent news reports said the Comelec was still awaiting votes from Quezon City and Manila, among others, even though these places are just kilometers away from the PICC. I spoke with UK Ambassador Peter Beckingham at Speaker Jose de Venecia's luncheon for the outgoing Chinese ambassador and queried him if vote-counting in the UK was manual or automated. He said it's all done by hand. As voting there falls on an ordinary working day, polling places remain open until 10 p.m.; counting begins at midnight and is finished by about 4 a.m. the following day. Of course it helps that Britain is a parliamentary system—the ballots involve far fewer names than our kilometric list.

* * *

A few days ago news reports quoted Kampi chair and Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno as saying his party will fully support Speaker De Venecia for the House's top post. That announcement was greeted in many places with elation, as it would eliminate the disruptive and divisive battles for the Speakership, enabling the House to concentrate on the legislative agenda of the 14th Congress. The main item in that agenda concededly is how to sustain the country's economic growth and render it more competitive with our neighbors. But recently Puno was contradicted by no less than his own party president, Rep. Luis Villafuerte, who said that 45 Kampi members together with about 20 members of Lakas-CMD, JDV's own party, were planning to support the candidacy of newly elected Cebu 2nd District Rep. Pablo Garcia, a former three-term House member. Villafuerte virtually accused Puno of not knowing what he was talking about.

* * *

The floating of Garcia's name came as a surprise, as many suspected that Villafuerte himself, one of two brilliant Bicolanos (the other being Rep. Edcel Lagman) who fought the two impeachment moves against GMA, would challenge JDV in his quest to create history by running for an unprecedented 5th term as Speaker. But in the days immediately following the elections, rumors circulated that Villafuerte wasn't interested in the Speakership, but would gladly settle as chair of the most powerful committee on appropriations. Another congressman being eyed as a possible challenger to JDV was Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles, his capable Majority Leader, but then, logic seemed to dictate that it would be better for Nograles to seek to succeed JDV who will be on his last term this time.

* * *

The two candidates come from the two most populous provinces, Pangasinan and Cebu, and the two biggest political groups, Lakas with 92 elected members in the House, and Kampi with 65 members. JDV has few equals in parliamentary skills and enjoys a vast network of contacts abroad that he has harnessed in the country's favor. Garcia is a respected constitutionalist but his parliamentary leadership skills are untried. Besides, he may be a bit too old for the rigors of running the House daily. Then, too, some members of the Garcia family face a number of controversies as well as the dynasty issue.

As four-term Speaker, JDV has his own band of fierce loyalists across the country. This includes Deputy Speaker for the Visayas Raul del Mar, who told this columnist in Cebu a few days before the elections that he and the other Cebuano legislators were squarely behind JDV's candidacy. "We won't consider anyone else," stressed Del Mar, and fellow Cebu City Rep. Antonio Cuenco was nodding. That picture might change if Garcia is able to rally the Visayan members.

* * *

The floating of Garcia's name may actually be rooted in deeper issues. Villafuerte said in media that a new leader could strike a better rapprochement with the Senate, in order to work out a more effective turnout of laws. The inference was that after JDV unsuccessfully pushed Charter change, his relationship with the Senate could be tough to mend. But a cooperative Senate may be a pipe dream, given that the four or five presidential hopefuls in the Senate are not expected to give GMA a chance to look better.

At the heart of this new challenge could be the Charter change issue itself. JDV is perceived as not giving up on Cha-cha as the vehicle for economic take-off, preferably led by himself, whereas Pabling Garcia fought the people's initiative right up to the Supreme Court.

* * *

Ultimately, the Speakership issue, as all House members know, is one vote, that of the President. Villafuerte was quoted as opining that this issue is "an internal matter" to the House, and that GMA would stay "neutral." Most pundits would agree that the Speakership issue is directly related to her own perception of her survival. If GMA thinks that a third impeachment move against her has utterly no chance, she could strengthen the candidate of Kampi, the group she built up to push her personal agenda. This group could be expected to push for Charter change to try to keep her beyond 2010. In case she swings support to Garcia, she should calibrate her moves very well, as abandoning the man who rallied to her no less than three times, on July 8, 2005 and in two impeachment attempts, would make her look very Machiavellian indeed, confirming what her worst critics have long been asserting.

Internship 101

YOUNG BLOOD

Jenss Hababag

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

OH, SO YOU ARE HAVING YOUR INTERNSHIP. HOW IS it like? Are you doing hands-on training or clerical work? Is your assignment exciting or boring?

I was going to have my on-the-job-training this summer, that is why I asked those in the higher classes about what their experience was like during their internship. Many of them told me it was all clerical work—like arranging company files from A to Z and receiving phone calls from 9 to 5. Others related that they worked more like errand boys and girls, serving coffee to the big bosses or running to the nearest bakeshop to buy them *merienda*, or getting documents photocopied, printed, etc. Only a lucky few said they got the chance to really practice what they learned in the classrooms.

I asked them how they got into the companies, and most of them admitted "through connections." I wanted to belong to the lucky few who had the opportunity to practice their craft. I wanted to be "short-listed" with them. I wanted to be among the lucky few, even without connections. I wanted to go for it on my own.

Luckily, the Internet provided me with all the "connections" I needed. And I mustered enough courage to call big companies and firms, inquiring about their internship programs. That obviously paid off. I was called to many interviews.

I think on-the-job-training should serve as stepping stones to professional growth. They should allow students to hone their skills to full potential, even as they expose the trainees to a world outside their comfort zones. So why waste this big opportunity?

As an intern, I believe I can choose the company where I want to have my training. I know that many interns settle for the first company to accept them, thus ending up with something less. I am glad that in this I had the chance to go into decision-making exercises; I had to evaluate which company was the best for my training.

As an intern, I have three goals.

First is to grow socially as I interact with different kinds of people. My boss might be moody and so to my colleagues, but this is the real world where Charles Darwin's survival of the fittest applies. So I mingle and deal with other people proactively, and learn to adapt.

Second, I want to grow intellectually, so I absorb all the things I can learn down to the smallest detail. I try to get something from my bosses and colleagues. I try to observe the activities of the company, thus becoming familiar with the industry. Today, I might be someone who looks at how things happen, but who knows? One day, I might be someone who makes things happen.

Third, I aspire to grow professionally. When I go out for on-the-job-training, I am not a student trapped in a "box" and weighed down by theories culled from books; I am an individual eager to apply the things I know. I want to venture into new horizons and have a first taste of practical knowledge. So when I am asked to do something, I do it at once. I do not make my being a student a reason not to do what is asked of me. For sure everyone was a newbie at a certain point in his lifetime. Everyone was a beginner and I happen to be one now, but I do not let my being a beginner hinder me from doing things professionals are good at. Yes, I may fail, but if I do, at least I know I tried hard. I also think failure comes in handy because it carries lessons and teaches you how to do something the better way next time.

Now that I am starting my third internship, I cannot help but think of the people who wasted their internship programs, serving coffee and buying snacks. They wasted a big opportunity to become competitive in their respective fields of endeavor.

I keep asking why they settled for something less. Why stay when you think there is no growth? Step out. Look for a company that will make use of your knowledge and skills. So many reputable companies provide good internship programs. If you look hard enough, you will be able to find one.

Be an intern who wants to grow holistically rather than an intern who just wants to complete the number of hours required in the curriculum. Believe me, when you know what you want, what you are good at, and what you need to learn, finding the right company is easier than it seems. Take it from me who found professional growth in my on-the-job-training.

Jenss Hababag, 20, is a Communication Arts student at the University of the Philippines; she is currently on her third internship, this time with a local lifestyle magazine.

Paying for school

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

SCHOOL STARTS ABOUT A WEEK FROM NOW, on June 11, and for our family the school year that's about to open should be pretty special because it marks the final year in college of our daughter Miya, the younger of our two children.

This means that when—and I do mean when, not if—she graduates from UP Diliman next year, we would be saying goodbye to our annual tuition woes which have been part of our parenting history for well over 20 years. Don't get me wrong, we have been able to send our children to the schools of our and their choice. And even if Miya had chosen to go to the Ateneo for college, as I had once dreamed for her, and not UP, I do believe we would still have managed to pay her way through it, though perhaps with not as much equanimity as we have enjoyed in the last three years.

As early as today, Miya is making noises about going to graduate school, in the United States preferably. I tease her that our parental obligation to shoulder her education expenses expires once she graduates from college. If she wants to go on to earn a master's degree or even a doctorate, then she'll have to either earn the tuition money herself or look for scholarships.

"But you can afford it!" she once argued. And I argued back that her father and I plan to spend our "post-graduate" years traveling in leisure. "You're so mean" was her erudite retort, and I laughed softly. Of course, when crunch time comes, we'll probably pony up some amount. But I'm still a firm believer in a statute of limitations on parental obligations, especially when it comes to a child's academic ambitions. At the very least, I look forward to a year's moratorium on school payments.

* * *

THERE was a time when my mid-year bonus, which companies give out precisely to help with mid-year tuition expenses, was enough to pay for a full school year's tuition for both of my children. But as the years sped by, I found the amount covered less and less, until I could pay only a quarter's tuition for it.

When I told my brother this story, he observed that it meant that either my salary hadn't caught up with the cost of living or education (which is true), or that tuition increases in my children's school had outpaced our income growth rate (which was also true).

Now I wonder how many parents with elementary school-age children grapple with this dilemma every June. Even families where children go to public schools where education is supposed to be free still have to scramble to find the money for transportation, books, uniforms, *baon* and even clean handkerchiefs.

Middle-class parents, with loftier aspirations for their children, struggle yearly to bridge the growing gap between their dwindling real income—eroded by inflation—and the inflationary increases in tuition and other fees in private schools. And when the gap proves impossible to surmount, parents are forced to rein in their dreams and ambitions, transferring their children from private academies to public schools.

* * *

THE TRUTH of the matter, though, is that tuition is only part—although a major part—of the host of expenses required to send children to school. At the Community of Learners, where both my children went for grade school and high school, the start of each school year was marked by shopping expeditions to buy the required school supplies. In Nursery School, a favorite pastime was putting together the yearly "shoebox" that each student lugged into the classroom to put into their own pigeon holes at the back of the room.

The shoebox was supposed to contain all the necessities a child might need during the hours spent in school. Together with my children, we would visit department stores, bookstores and *tiangges* to search for a plastic cup, toothbrush, toothpaste, a small towel, utensils and a roll of toilet paper to put in the box. Pretty simple items, you may think, but of course they also needed to be in the most "in" designs, in bright, cute colors. The search for the shoebox contents also coincided with the annual shopping expeditions for new underwear, socks, shoes and school outfits, not to mention the late-night sessions wrapping book after book in plastic as well as designing the most colorful, perky wrappers for those famous shoeboxes.

I knew my days as a hands-on parent were numbered when, all of a sudden it seemed, I was no longer gathering items for a shoebox or covering books in plastic. I haven't even done any shopping lately for school outfits, since my daughter has been going to UP Diliman in the same ratty denim pants, faded T-shirts and flip-flops for the last three years.

* * *

IF this was all that was required of parenting a school-age child, then of course our journey through those years would have been a breeze. But then we also needed to supervise their homework (even if at COL there were only minimal assignments), help review for tests and exams and assist with projects, including helping build science models and Egyptian pyramids.

Now that I'm writing all this on hindsight, I find myself actually overcome with nostalgia, for the time when parenting seemed to consist of adventures and discoveries, learning alongside our children and finding out things about them even as we sought to provide them with good models of behavior and personhood.

Still, as older friends tell me, I shouldn't yearn too much for those years because before I know it, I will be re-living them, care of my grandchildren. "Remember, parenting never ends!" they warn, citing how they still cannot retire because they have to help out with their grandchildren's tuition and other expenses. They sigh and bitch and kick up a storm, but they say all this with a smile.

The demise of provincial private schools

COMMENTARY

Juan Miguel M. Luz

CLOSE TO 20 PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL STUdents are enrolled in private schools, which is remarkable considering that we are a lower middle-income country.

Take out elite schools such as Ateneo and La Salle and you see most private schools catering to the same demographic profile as public schools. Parents invest in private education because they seek something extra such as academic discipline, religious orientation or extra-curricular activities. Most schools run by the Church or private groups actually cater to families whose status and income are not very different from those that attend public schools.

Furthermore, over 1,700 non-elite private high schools in GASTPE (Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education) charge tuition fees from P1,500 to just over P17,000 per year. The average tuition is P7,012 per year. The median is P5,200. That is lower than the cost per student in public schools. It is also only 10 percent of what Thailand spends per student.

How affordable is private education in the province? In Isabela, Fr. Manuel Medina of Lasalette told me that the 14-percent increase in tuition they imposed led to a loss of over 100 students who transferred to the crowded—but tuition-free—public schools. Lasalette San Mateo's tuition fee hike amounted only to P95 a month or P950 annually, and it was their first increase in three years.

The GASTPE program was set up 15 years ago to infuse much-needed subsidies into non-elite private education. By 2005-2006, over 425,000 students were enrolled in non-elite private high schools at P4,000 per student.

Education Service Contracting (ESC) was limited to accredited high schools. If tuition exceeded P4,000, parents would pay the difference or schools absorbed it, or both.

In 2003, Secretary Edilberto de Jesus put in place a program to begin increasing the number of ESC slots from 225,000 to 475,000 students. Department of Education calculations subsequently revealed that private high schools had lost an even larger number of students since 1995—estimated at 688,000 actual and opportunity loss.

De Jesus strengthened ESC by tightening accreditation. If participating schools had high dropout rates, fewer slots were given. Schools that carried "ghost" students were dropped. Over a three-year period, close to 100 schools were dis-accredited.

The next step was to improve on quality with testing provided by the Center for Education Measurement. Schools that scored poorly on achievement tests were put on probation. Continued probation would lead to dis-accreditation.

Then in 2006 and again in 2007, the administration introduced the Education Voucher System (EVS) that gave a printed voucher worth P4,000 directly to parents so they could "shop" around for a good private school. To fund EVS, the administration started by using the additional ESC funds in 2006. In 2007, ESC slots were limited and these funds moved to EVS.

In more developed countries, a market-driven mechanism like the EVS provides parents with more options—or schools—to choose from. Here, however, it seems that the paper voucher is being used as patronage by LGUs and DepEd officials, more so because parents really don't have many good schools to choose from.

And this system is allowing dis-accredited schools, especially those found to carry ghost students, to actively go after vouchers to keep themselves afloat. Stories about the selling of vouchers like gift checks are now beginning to surface.

Worse, there is no monitoring mechanism in the DepEd to check where 100,000 vouchers are going at this time.

Today, there are additional DepEd guidelines that will further restrict ESC in favor of EVS.

Each school is now limited to 40 ESC freshmen. That adds up to 68,000 slots or 50 percent of the previous year. Each year now, ESC will be lessened by 50,000 plus slots as these will be moved to EVS.

Schools charging more than P12,000 in tuition and other fees will now be dropped from the program. Yet many of these schools absorb an additional portion of the tuition to help parents out. Thus, this additional subsidy to education will also be lost.

Private elementary school graduates are no longer eligible for ESC, which will be limited to red- or black-coded public high schools (i.e., overcrowded public high schools). If the DepEd research were done properly by the new undersecretary for programs, it would show that taking ESC away from non-red-coded areas would lead to an increase in migration from private to public schools, making these red-coded. The expansion of ESC under Secretary De Jesus was to limit the additional slots each year to red-coded areas while retaining the existing schools to help manage an already bad public school overcrowding situation.

ESC is easier than EVS to exact accountability. Monitoring 1,700 private schools for performance is far easier than checking up on 100,000 plus vouchers in the hands of individuals, unless public funds were meant to be spent on patronage anyway.

The immediate and long-term effects will be disastrous. In the short-term, it will increase the number of fly-by-night private "schools" chasing vouchers. In the long term, it will lead to the demise of legitimate private schools in the provinces who will continue to experience serious drops in enrollment.

There is logic to management. But if there is a political agenda—and patronage is political—then no amount of logic will save the day.

A Teacher, a party-list organization, advocates for GASTPE reforms in its legislative agenda. It thanks all who voted for the organization in this year's elections.

Juan Miguel M. Luz is a a former DepEd undersecretary

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

IN THE NEWS

Grace Padaca

In RP because of people, not the English language

LETTERS

IT IS A MYTH THAT THE PHILIPpines is "Asia's largest English-speaking nation." Of course, if this were true, it would be wonderful for Filipino pride. But this is not so. That lofty title belongs to India.

By sheer number, India, formerly a British colony, is Asia's largest English-speaking nation. Its over 1 billion population far exceeds that of the Philippines' 87 million. Like the Philippines, English is also one of India's official languages. India's middle class of over 300 million is predominantly English-educated, which tells us that English is a common language there, especially among the ruling classes. This is not to mention the millions more in rural India who speak at least basic English.

While it is true that many Filipinos speak and understand English, the question is: what kind of English? It is not enough that one can speak English. Proficiency in English entails proper grammatical usage.

True, the Filipino middle class, like its Indian counterpart, is predominantly English-educated. But it is far smaller in number than India's middle class. But in the countryside, where the majority of Filipinos live, is completely another matter. Poverty simply does not permit the vast majority of Filipino children to have the luxury of proper English training.

Many rural Filipinos speak just enough English, if at all, to be understood. But correct, grammatical English is lacking. Then there is the issue of American English and British English and the relevant accents—an issue that's not being debated here.

It is the correct, grammatical usage of English, which makes one proficient in the language. Even if spoken in "carabao" English accent, proper English may be deemed acceptable for as long as the purpose of communication is realized.

In my stay in this beautiful country, I've met middle-aged barrio folk who did not even finish elementary school, and yet they spoke correct, grammatical American English, with the right accent, to boot. This just confirms the fact that the Philippine educational system in the '60s and '70s was much better than the one the country has today.

Back to India, it can be said that that country is, in fact, the largest English-speaking nation not only in Asia but also in the whole world. Even America, with its 300 million people, can't have a claim to the title. Not all Americans speak English fluently. In fact, many old immigrants—both long-time residents and new arrivals, especially from the Orient—don't speak English at all. On the other hand, speaking bad English in an American accent is also not acceptable. So much for accent and diction.

Finally, before die-hard Filipinos start hurling brickbats and tomatoes at me, may I affirm that I did not choose to live in the Philippines for the English language, but for the beauty of the country, its culture and above all, its people (the friendliest in the world with or without English proficiency).

—MOHAMMED YAKUB RAZZAQUE,
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BOARD OF CANVASSERS
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BOARD OF CANVASSERS

VOTE canvassing still a long wait for candidates and their supporters

INQUIRER PHOTO

Post-2007 elections: fearless readings and forecasts

1. IF THE RECENT ELECTIONS are any gauge, the loss of Vicente Sotto III, Cesar Montano and Richard Gomez serves public notice that, henceforth, Philippine politics is off-limits to show-biz people, particularly the actors.

2. The Commission on Elections readily declares a failure of election when a petition for that purpose is filed by candidates identified with the administration.

3. The claim that administration candidates dominated the local elections is rather misleading. Many local candidates of the opposition, including anti-administration party lists, beat rivals who enjoyed very strong support from the administration.

4. The May 14, 2007 midterm elections were indeed a referendum on Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's presidency. The writings on the wall, not to mention her negative trust ratings in surveys, are clear: The Filipino people want her to be held accountable via the normal democratic processes.

5. With Antonio Trillanes, Gregorio Honasan, Panfilo Lacson and Rodolfo Biazon in the Senate, it will be hard for the military and the police to play partisan politics.

6. A repeat of "Hyatt 10" is not far removed.

7. A now sickly and unpopular secretary will soon take a leave of absence and with him out of the national scene, Philippine politics might yet be saner.

8. More heads must roll, not the least, those of the chair and commissioners of the Comelec, all of whom figured in the electoral mess of 2007.

9. With the opposition having gained more ground, we see the light at the end of the tunnel. But we should not yet let our guard down. Let's continue to be vigilant against a final attempt by losers to manipulate the election results. Let's keep our eyes closely fixed on the canvassing of votes.

—PRIMER C. PAGUNURAN,
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Visitor shares thoughts on Filipinos

I AM AN INDIAN RELIGIOUS blessed to take my novitiate in the Philippines. In the past year I've been here, the INQUIRER was the only medium through which I had contact with the world. I would like to thank the INQUIRER for the service. Dare to ask. Dare to speak. Let its "disturbing presence" be felt in the country.

Though I have no right to comment on the Philippines' internal affairs, in solidarity with the people of the Philippines, let me share some of my views.

This country is blessed with scenic beauty and abundant resources, yet is unable to compete with its neighbors. Unlike most other peoples, Filipinos at home and abroad are struggling to survive. A country earning billions of dollars from its overseas workers couldn't immediately repatriate its people from Lebanon. The Philippines doesn't need to send "super maids" to faraway lands. It just has to provide simple livelihood right here. The plight of women, political killings and ever-worsening poverty are issues that need to be addressed immediately.

Politicians should give the people what they deserve. Do not lure them with empty promises. Responsible leaders answer for what they do to their constituents. Good governance is enhanced not by constitutional assembly or Charter change but by dedication and determination.

Neither Manny Pacquiao nor Jun Ducat can save this country. But God can. God is using prophets and saviors to save this country. Through the INQUIRER, I met some of them: Eugenia Apostol, Conrado de Quiros, Juan Mercado, Ramon Tulfo, Tony Meloto, Fr. Gestie Advincula, Fr. Joaquin Bernas, Bo Sanchez and many more. I am sure, with these people, the INQUIRER can bring change.

The Philippines is a great nation. It showed the world that People Power can overthrow dictatorships. Once again, Filipinos need People Power—not to oust the present administration but to transform the Philippines into a really peaceful, prosperous and powerful republic. Edsa won't be enough for this. The effort needs every Filipino hand there is.

The greatest asset of this country is its passionate youth. They have shown their passion in scaling Mt. Everest and in many other record-breaking feats. If motivated properly, they can effect the needed change. Patricia Evangelista, Michael Tan and the Youngblood contributors reflect this truth.

I thank First Gentleman Mike Arroyo for dropping the charges against the journalists. Stay closer to God by staying spiritually and physically healthy. Let this country set an example for press freedom and human dignity.

As I leave this country, I promise to make a simple contribution, that is, to add these words to my daily prayers: "Lord, thank you for blessing this land with beauty; save it from poverty and powerlessness. Let all its people enjoy and share with each other its resources. Bless its politicians and leaders that they may seek the common good."

—BROTHER JOHNSON, SDS
jjvinoth@gmail.com

New hope for Novo Ecijanos

THE JUST CONCLUDED NATIONal and local elections saw the emergence of a new alliance of young and idealistic political leaders in Nueva Ecija.

Led by Rep. Aurelio Umali and three-termer Cabanatuan City Mayor Julius Cesar "Jay" Vergara, the alliance showed political savvy and might when its candidates for Nueva Ecija governor and Cabanatuan City mayor trounced the opposing candidates fielded by the well-entrenched Joson clan. The Josons lorded it over Nueva Ecija politics for five consecutive decades.

Under the incoming new provincial dispensation, "can the ordinary Novo Ecijano expect tangible change and better things to happen in his relatively, economically sluggish province?" This is a question in the minds of many.

In their campaign sorties, the candidates of the victorious alliance promised to bring real peace and progress that would, they said, filter to the province's great majority. A lofty goal, indeed, but easier said than done.

Meanwhile, all the ordinary Novo Ecijanos can do for now, as they welcome the incoming provincial administration, is to continue to dream and hope that someday real progress and prosperity will come to their beloved province.

—PRUDENCIO E. MAGPAYO,
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RP, under GMA, doesn't deserve UNHRC seat

THE REELECTION OF THE PHILIPpines to the United Nations Human Rights Council is a slap in the face of the victims of human rights violations and the activists fighting—despite the risk to life and limb—to uphold and defend human rights in this country.

The reelection, though alarming, is hardly surprising. The Asean countries that helped the Philippines to keep its seat are also known for numerous human rights violations. This should not be seen as a vindication for the Arroyo administration, as Malacañang wants to make it appear.

Despite mounting pressure from local and international groups, the Arroyo administration has not shown a resolve to put a stop to human rights abuses and give justice to the victims. Malacañang should be ashamed about winning a seat in an international human rights body.

To prove that it is worthy of that seat, it should prosecute the perpetrators and stop the persecution of its critics and political foes. Why can't the Arroyo administration do this? UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston said that the military is in total denial of the killings.

What happened to the investigations conducted by the Melo Commission and Task Force Usig? Last February, the Melo Commission recommended that some military officials be held accountable for some killings. But nothing has happened. In fact, one of the officials, now in retirement, ran for a congressional seat.

It appears that the Arroyo administration is trying to tell the victims that "time will heal their wounds." In a statement before the May 14 elections, the President urged Filipinos "to put a closure to all chapters of conflict and battles once the nation makes its decision."

The nation has again made its decision in the last elections, except that its decision is being tampered with to ensure that the current government and its people will keep their despotic hold on power.

The Philippines, under the Arroyo administration, doesn't deserve a seat in the UNHRC because of its terrible record of human rights neglect and abuse.

—DAISY ARAGO,
executive director,
Center for Trade Union and Human Rights, 127 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave, Cubao, Quezon City

Addressing wrong ailment with wrong medicine

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9439, which bans private hospitals from detaining patients with unpaid bills, is not the right "medicine" for the "ailment" it seeks to cure. Well, politicians are rich and they can afford to pay their medical bills.

The real "headache" is the high costs of medical goods and services in the Philippines. What should be done is to look into why such costs are high and how they can be lowered—e.g., by reducing the taxes on medical services and by importing cheaper medicines.

—ANTON SY,
ansj64@gmail.com

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Regional Office 10
Cagayan de Oro

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The *National Food Authority, Region 10* through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites Truckers/Hauler Owners/Operators/Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project: **Contract for the Supply of 2007 Trucking/Hauling Services**

Location: **Cagayan de Oro City Pier Disport to NFA-Cagayan de Oro City/Region 10 Owned/ Leased Warehouses and Marawi/Lanao del Sur**

Brief Description: Contract involves the hauling of bags of NFA rice from Cagayan de Oro City Pier Disport to NFA-Cagayan de Oro/Region 10 owned/leased warehouses and GID Marawi/Lanao del Sur.

CONTRACT NO.	DESTINATION PROVINCE/ WAREHOUSE	ESTIMATED VOLUME IN BAGS OF 50 kg.	MINIMUM NUMBER OF TRUCKS REQUIRED	MINIMUM NET LOAD CAPACITY REQUIRED (bags)	RATE PER BAG OF 50 kg (Php)	APPROVED BUDGET CEILING (Php)	BID DOCS PER LOT PER CONTRACT (Php)
7-1b	CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY PIER DISPORT TO GID PATAG, GID BALOY NFA-CAGAYAN DE ORO/ REGION 10/ LEASED WAREHOUSES	900,000 bags at 100,000 bags per lot (a total of 9 lots)	8 trucks per lot	4,000 bags per lot	4.51	4,059,000.00	2,500.00
7-9b	LANAO DEL SUR GID MARAWI	100,000	6	3,000	22.28	2,226,000.00	5,000.00

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding and have key personnel and equipment (owned) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

ACTIVITIES	ADDRESS	DATE	TIME
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	2F, NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	May 29-June 8, 2007	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM working days
2. Pre-Bidding Conference	2F, NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	June 14, 2007	1:30 PM
3. Deadline for Submission and Receipt of Eligibility Requirements & Bid Documents	2F, NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	June 26, 2007	1:30 PM
4. Opening of Bids	2F, NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	June 26, 2007	1:35 PM

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable/non-transferrable amount for bid documents per Contract to the Cashier of the National Food Authority – Cagayan de Oro City.

The **National Food Authority, Region 10** assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The **National Food Authority, Region 10** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the Bidders.

(Sgd.) **CAMILO D. MAGTRAYO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI - May 29 & June 6, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY
(Public Estates Authority)
7/F Legaspi Towers 200 Bldg., 107 Paseo de Roxas St., Legaspi Village, 1226 City of Makati
Tel. Nos. (02) 817-4711 to 13; (02) 813-1441 to 45; Facsimile No. (02) 815-2662
Website www.pea.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY FOR MANPOWER SERVICES (07-013)

1. The Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), through its corporate budget intends to apply the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) in the sum of **Four Million Nine Hundred Twenty Seven Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Five Pesos and 40/100 (Php 4,927,355.40)**, inclusive of VAT, under the contract for the Supply for Manpower Services. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The PRA now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Supply for Manpower Services for twelve (12) months. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II and Annex A of Section III of the Bidding Documents
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act." Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB).
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents starting **June 6, 2007** from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased from **June 6 to 14, 2007** by interested Bidders from the BAC Secretariat and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of **Four Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Seven Pesos (Php 4,927.00)**. The method of payment will be cash or check payable to PRA. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The PRA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **June 13, 2007** at 10:00 A.M. at the PRA Conference Room, 8th Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the PRA Office on or before **June 26, 2007** at 1:15 P.M. (PRA 7th floor wall clock time). All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and amount indicated in the BDS. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on **June 26, 2007** at 1:30 P.M. at the PRA Conference Room, 8th Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
9. Prospective Bidders should have undertaken a similar undertaking in the last three (3) years, and should have key personnel and services / equipment available for the manpower services contemplated herein
10. Pursuant to BIR Revenue Regulations 03-2005, all prospective bidders are mandated to file their income and business tax returns electronically using the Electronic Filing and Payment System (EFPS).
11. The PRA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.
12. The PRA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Original Signed
DOMINGO T. LIGOT
BAC Chairman

(PDI - May 29 & June 4, 2007)

'Masa' belies Abueva's claim on President Erap

THIS IS TO TAKE ISSUE WITH FORMER UP president Jose Abueva who was quoted as saying: "We've tried Joseph Estrada and he was a grave disappointment. He was so corrupt and the people were disillusioned. We in UP voted for him. He said he was for the masses and that he was for the poor. It turned out he was only for himself." (INQUIRER, 5/20/07)

For someone who touts himself to be a political scientist, Abueva, through these remarks, betrays both his biased pre-judgment of President Joseph Estrada's case before the Sandiganbayan and his lack of scientific objectivity regarding Estrada's pro-poor policies and programs.

The Philippine government's statistics and those of international organizations like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank, clearly show that the poor and, in fact, the great majority of Filipinos were better off during Estrada's abbreviated two and a half year term than they are now after six years of the Arroyo presidency. Both the misery index and the tax burden were lower during Estrada's shortened term than they are today.

Moreover, real per pupil government spending on education reached its highest during Estrada's term and then fell to its lowest level in 2006. Similarly, real per capita government spending on health was also highest during Estrada's term but fell under the Arroyo administration.

Besides, if Estrada had worked only for himself and not for the masses, he could not have maintained a solid mass base of support from 38 percent of the electorate—particularly from the C, D and E classes—after six years of incarceration. This is shown by the impressive victory of the Genuine Opposition senatorial ticket which he endorsed and supported.

Obviously, Estrada's solid base of political support from the poor belies Abueva's baseless and biased remarks and exposes his lack of political acumen and his being not in touch with the Filipino masses.

—RUFUS RODRIGUEZ,
spokesman for President Estrada and congressman-elect, 2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City

Evidence of cheating in Lanao 'pours like rain'

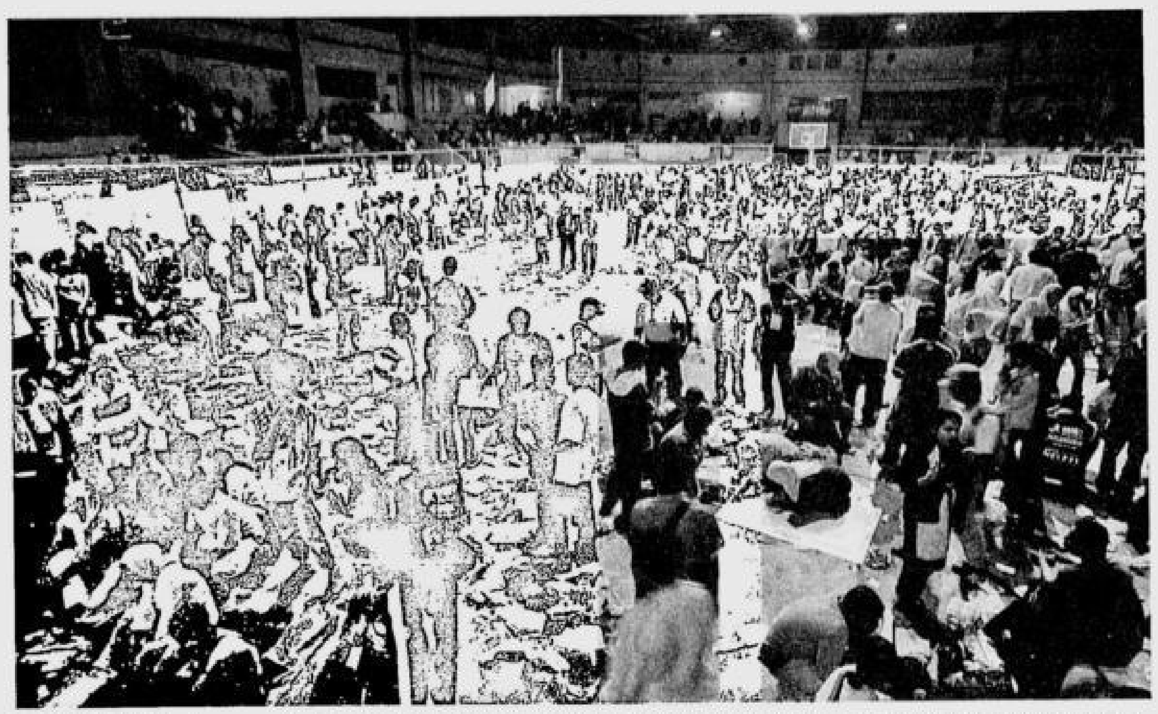
From page A1

"The watchdogs have failed. We could not stop the fraud. It's the Comelec (Commission on Elections) which has the power (to prevent fraud)," Dalidig said.

Despite the presence of watchdogs, evidence of cheating "have been pouring like rain," former Human Rights Commissioner Nasser Marohomsalic told the INQUIRER.

"With all the evidence with me, I can say there was cheating," said Marohomsalic, who works with the legal volunteers group Lente.

He said the evidence included certificates of canvass (CoCs) that did not match. The CoCs are vote tallies by town or province.



POLL SITE: Teachers and poll watchers roam around the provincial capitol gymnasium as votes from the special elections held on May 26-27 in Lanao del Sur are tallied. REM ZAMORA

Scenes of pandemonium

Other officers of Namfrel and the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), a Church-backed watchdog, gave dramatic accounts of cases of vote fraud they saw with their own eyes during last weekend's special elections in Lanao del Sur.

Their accounts included stories of a fist fight, a shouting match and a squabble over an envelope filled with P20 bills intended to buy votes.

The GMA television network last night also showed a video clip of a poll watcher peering behind a voter as the latter filled out his ballot.

PPCRV chief and former Ambassador Henrietta de Villa described scenes of "pandemonium" in several towns, adding that "the reported irregularities in Manila were nothing" compared to what she and other poll monitors saw in Lanao del Sur over the weekend.

Like a stampede

De Villa was with Namfrel chair Edward Go in Kapai town on Saturday to supervise their poll volunteers.

"People in the lines (outside the school) were shouting at each other. And no one seemed to be in command as people waited for the elections to begin," she said.

De Villa and Go said voting in Kapai was delayed by more than two hours. As expected, voters lost their cool while waiting.

When the school gates were finally opened at around 9:30 a.m. so that the polling could start, voters ran to the precincts "like a herd of stampeding horses, shouting like anything. It was like a marketplace," De Villa said.

In one precinct, she said, a shouting match erupted over allegations that two sets of voters' lists were being used by the board of election inspectors (BEI).

Go said those involved were a watcher of Lakas-CMD and a volunteer for Kampi.

He described some of the scenes he saw as "chaotic."

De Villa said that in another precinct, she saw a BEI chair being accused of stashing ballots in her bag.

"When (the people) looked in the bag, (the ballots were) there. But the BEI chair dismissed everything, saying that the ballots were planted," she said.

Nothing like it in Manila

Nearby, a fist fight broke out, but the brawl was cut short by "a soldier who fired a warning shot in the air."

"There was nothing in Manila quite like that," De Villa said.

She said that in a public school in Masiu town, no secrecy folders were used to keep prying eyes from the ballots while they were being filled out by voters.

Supporters of various candidates were also giving away campaign materials right inside the polling areas, De Villa said.

Inside another precinct, one person was coaching a voter on what to write on his ballot. Near the door of another precinct, De Villa chanced on a man "distributing what appeared to be flyers."

"It turned out that he had a wad of P20 bills and an envelope in his hands. I grabbed one bill, *naghatakan kami* (We fought over it). I got the envelope and the P20 bills," she said.

Later, De Villa learned that P20 was the going rate per vote for a council seat.

In the meantime, she was keeping the envelope and the wad of bills "as souvenirs."

Minutes later, De Villa chanced upon two boys loitering near the school.

"I asked how old one of them was and he answered, '16 *po*,' prompting his companion to say, 'No, tell her that you're 17!'"

"They still admitted that they were allowed to vote in the school even after I told them that what they did was wrong," De Villa said.

A few steps later, she caught a burly man persuading a "disabled woman to allow him to fill out her ballot for her.

Superhuman job

De Villa said the man introduced himself as a "political party volunteer."

"He explained that it was better for him to write down her preferred candidates since the instructions in the polling precinct were in English and the woman was considered disabled since she only knew Arabic ... She was very hesitant to hand over the ballot to him," De Villa said.

Go and De Villa said they reported the incidents to Election Commissioner Rene V. Sarmiento, who was in charge of the special voting in Lanao del Sur.

De Villa said she had much sympathy for Sarmiento who was "performing a superhuman job" of making sure the voting and the canvassing of the results were kept orderly.

Laywer Carlos Medina Jr., secretary general of the Ateneo human rights center, said it was for Comelec to investigate the allegations of fraud.

As of yesterday, Daligdig said Namfrel was only able to get hold of 5 CoCs from the 15 towns and one city where regular voting was held on May 14.

The PPCRV has in its possession only 87 ERs out of a total of 494 ERs from the 13 towns where special polls were held.

Marohomsalic said the elections could have failed again without the presence of the military.

Voters coached

"There was shooting in almost all towns, but the military held their ground," he said.

Still, the presence of thousands of police and soldiers failed to deter fraud during the special elections.

Volunteers of the Citizens Coalition for ARMM Electoral Reforms (Citizens CARE) and the PPRCRV stationed in the towns had documented cases of fraud, they said.

The most common device was voter coaching.

Vote-buying was rampant in Binidayan, Butig and Sultan Dumalondong where it occurred inside polling centers.

Bills ranging from P50 to P100 were offered per vote for local candidates, while P300 to P500 was the going rate for gubernatorial and vice gubernatorial candidates.

In Binidayan, operators working for candidates forced voters under the noses of the BEIs to show to them their filled ballots to ensure they had complied with the deal.

Election law must prevail over culture, says Abalos

By Tarra Quismundo

AMID REPORTS THAT MINORS were able to vote in Maguindanao, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) said yesterday the law must prevail over cultural practices in election matters.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said individuals under 18 who might be allowed by their culture to vote were still covered by the law fixing the minimum voting age at 18.

"They may have their culture different from us but their culture should come within the law," Abalos said. "Our laws say you have to be 18, even among Muslims."

Reports from Maguindanao said that some people as young as 16 were able to vote in the recent elections. Some Muslim officials said this was allowed under Sharia law.

Abalos conceded that it was difficult to check the actual age of young voters showing up in precincts in Maguindanao as the province lacked a birth registry.

"Considering that we have no records of births there, we can never say (how old they are)," he said.

"Especially if they are with their mothers—the mother might say 'you are not the one who gave birth to him/her, why do you know better than I do?'" Abalos said.

"Then you have nothing to disprove that he or she is not 18 years old," he added.

In such cases, Abalos gave election officials "the widest discretion" to determine whether one was old enough to vote.

The issue of minors voting in an election was one of a swarm of poll cases that have confronted the Comelec.

Another case concerned poll worker Faizal Kalantungan, whose assignment as an election inspector was disputed by Maguindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol.

Kalantungan has executed an affidavit saying that 38 ballot boxes and 190 election returns remained unclaimed at the Sangguniang Bayan, putting into question Bedol's claim that the provincial canvass of votes had been finished.

Bayan Muna Rep. Neri Colmenares yesterday showed a copy of an official list indicating that Kalantungan was a member of the board of election inspectors in Pagalungan, Maguindanao. *With a report from Jocelyn Uy*

Tired . . .

From page A1

The two researchers found that army ants of Central and South America match their own bodies to the size of the hole they want to plug.

In fact, according to the researchers' report in the journal Animal Behavior, several ants even plunge together to fill in bigger holes.

Scott Powell and Nigel Franks of the University of Bristol studied an army ant species called *Eciton burchellii*, which march across the forests of Central and South America in swarms of up to 200,000.

These raiders always remain connected to the nest by a trail of other ants. But this highway of living ants can be extremely uneven as it passes over leaves and branches on the forest floor.

So a few of the ants climb into the dips to make a smooth road.

"When it comes to rapid road repairs, the ants have their own do-it-yourself highways agency," Franks said in a statement.

"When the traffic has passed, the downtrodden ants climb out of the potholes and follow their nest mates home," Powell added.

"Broadly, our research demonstrates that a simple but highly specialized behavior performed by a minority of ant workers can improve the performance of the majority, resulting in a clear benefit for the society as a whole."

Powell and Franks conducted experiments in the lab to demonstrate this ant behavior.

"We inserted planks drilled with different sizes of hole into the army ants' trails to see how well different sizes of ant matched different sizes of pot hole. Indeed, they fit beautifully," Franks said.

"I think every road user who has ever inwardly cursed as their vehicle bounced across a pothole—jarring every bone in their body—will identify with this story," he added.

Most ant species are believed to live in large colonies of sisters, all with the same mothers. Males are also sometimes produced, but only under certain circumstances. *Reuters*

Pimentel reclaims No. 12 spot from Zubiri

From page A1

Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan, an independent, stayed at No. 5 with Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III (GO) trailing him by more than 200,000 votes.

TU candidates Edgardo Angara and Joker Arroyo clung to the seventh and eighth slots. Alan Peter Cayetano (GO) remained at No. 9. Independent candidate Gregorio Honasan was still at No. 10 while Antonio Trillanes IV hung on at No. 11.

Vote shaving in Davao

Tabulation of the Caloocan CoC was deferred after 23 election returns from Districts 1 and 2 were reported missing by election officer Juliet Villar.

The NBC also deferred the canvassing of the CoC from vote-rich Davao City after ordering a retabulation of the votes.

The Davao City CoC became controversial after it was reported that some 84,000 votes were allegedly shaved from Pimentel and added to TU's Ralph Recto.

Honest mistake

But city board of canvassers chair, Irma Vera Morcillo, explained to the NBC and the election lawyers that it was an honest mistake by the tabulator.

She said she immediately reconvened the board and retabulated the votes in the presence of all representatives of political parties, including the Lakas-CMD and the Liberal Party, and the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

"We're not proud of our mistake but we're not hiding it," Morcillo said, noting that she took offense at a TV news anchor's insinuation that the city board of canvassers was involved in electoral fraud.

Morcillo is on the staff of Election Commissioner Romeo Brawner.

The vice chair of the city board of canvassers demonstrated to the NBC and the election lawyers how the mistake in the tabulation was committed.

But TU lawyers, led by Romulo Macalintal, still pointed out discrepancies in the corrected CoC involving the results of other senatorial candidates. He requested a deferment of the tabulation of the Davao City CoC.

Brawner did not agree, pointing out that all parties were represented, including the Lakas-CMD lawyer, during the retabulation in Davao City.

"This is now the strategy of Team Unity, to have the CoCs deferred even if the defects of the CoC are not as substantial as those pointed out by the opposition. They are now taking the offensive stance," Leila de Lima, counsel for the GO's Cayetano, told reporters.

Taguig, North Cotabato

The tabulation of the CoCs from Taguig-Pateros and North Cotabato were also deferred yesterday.

Some statements of votes (SoV) from Taguig-Pateros were unsigned by the tabulators and election officials.

The North Cotabato CoC was deferred because, according to de Lima, some votes were discovered to be padded for certain TU candidates and shaved off GO candidates like Cayetano.

"Our party copy of the CoC showed different entries from the SoV from the city board of canvassers. We think the anomaly took place not at the city level but at the provincial board of canvassers," De Lima said.

A visibly irked Zubiri yesterday disputed the allegations of cheating by Pimentel.

"Until all the votes are counted, he should just keep his mouth shut while waiting for dust to settle," said Zubiri, who expects himself to end up at No. 11 and Recto at No. 12 when the canvassing has been finalized

TU seeks recount

In a move that can further delay the proclamation of winners, the TU is filing with the Comelec an appeal for a recount in Metro Manila and 15 provinces where the GO dominated the canvassing.

At a press conference, TU deputy spokesperson Tonypet Albano said yesterday the TU move to direct its lawyer, Macalintal, to seek a recanvassing of the votes in GO bailiwicks could lead to a "failure of elections" in these areas.

These areas could affect 7 million votes.

Albano said a retabulation of CoCs would further delay the proclamation of winners.

Macalintal is expected to file up to 130 cases of election fraud with the Comelec against the GO, using affidavits of witnesses, tampered election returns, similar thumb marks, wrong tallies and election documents without watermarks.

Albano said the TU's appeal was not unlike the plea of the GO in the Maguindanao elections in which the opposition claimed the administration cheated in forcing a 12-0 sweep of the Top 12.

"We're just doing to them what they are doing to us. They are questioning how we swept Maguindanao. So we will also question them how they swept us in their bailiwicks like Makati and General Santos City," said Albano.

"If the Comelec granted the GO's appeal, I don't see why we should not be granted the same," he said.

Wood beats TU bets

Albano zeroed in on the GO's overwhelming victory in Makati City where the opposition leader Jejomar Binay holds sway.

"No offense to Victor Wood but how can it be possible that Victor Wood is ahead of all TU bets in the tally where GO and independents got the top 12 spots?" he said.

Albano only named Makati, San Juan, Caloocan and Pasig as the main targets of its appeal for retabulation of the CoCs.

While he was hopeful that the Comelec could officially name some winning senatorial candidates this week, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said some six million votes yet to be canvassed could delay the proclamation.

Aside from Lanao del Sur and Shariff, CoCs from Basilan, Lanao del Norte, Sultan Kudarat and Surigao del Norte have yet to be forwarded to the national canvassing center. They have 1,877,662 registered voters.

The CoCs that have been deferred include Maguindanao, Sulu, Caloocan City, Taguig-Pateros, Davao del Sur, North Cotabato, South Cotabato and Davao City, with a total of 3,887,246 registered voters.

Sarmiento resigns as task force chief

From page A1

Sarmiento said, speaking in a nasal voice that suggested he was suffering from a heavy cold.

The Comelec set up the Maguindanao task force after teachers claimed they filled out ballots even before the voting could begin in that province on May 14 to ensure a 12-0 sweep by President Macapagal-Arroyo's Team Unity senatorial candidates.

But after supervising the special elections in 13 towns of Lanao del Sur on Saturday and Sunday, Sarmiento said he could no longer lead the Maguindanao probe.

"It will be physically difficult for me if I will have to go again to Maguindanao after this," he said.

Sumalipao out

But he said he would still supervise the work of Task Force Maguindanao, being the commissioner in charge of the ARMM.

However, he will ask the commission en banc to designate a new commissioner or a senior lawyer to head the investigating team.

As in Lanao del Sur, Sarmiento said that ARMM Director Ray Sumalipao—a controversial figure after being linked to alleged cheating in the region—would have no role in Task Force Maguindanao.

The canvassing of votes in Maguindanao has long been completed but the certificate of canvass from the province has yet to be tabulated by the Comelec commissioners sitting as the National Board of Canvassers.

First time

"This is the first time he got sick," a member of Sarmiento's staff said.

Abalos said Sarmiento "begged to be excused" from heading the task force because of health reasons.

"He has lost his voice. The pressure's too much. He told me, 'Chairman, please have pity on me,'" Abalos said in a press conference.

Abalos stressed that Sarmiento was not "eased out" of the task force.

"This investigation (in Maguindanao) will go as far as pinning responsibility, if there is any error or wrongdoing committed and then filing the necessary charges," Abalos said.

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Poll exec in trouble over media gag

By Felipe V. Celino
Inquirer Visayas

ROXAS CITY—ELECTION COMMISSIONER RESURreccion Borra gave a Roxas City election officer 10 days to answer the complaint of local journalists over the media coverage ban during the canvassing of votes here.

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) Capiz chapter filed a complaint on May 16 against Roxas City election officer Genalyn Jimenez for banning journalists from covering the canvassing of votes here. The NUJP-Capiz addressed their letter-complaint to Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, Commissioner Borra, Western Visayas Comelec regional director Renato Magbutay and provincial election supervisor Wil Arceño.

No comment

In a memorandum dated May 22, Borra has ordered Jimenez to give her reasons for the media ban, said NUJP-Capiz president John Heredia.

However, Jimenez refused to issue any comment about the memorandum, except to ask them to wait for her written answer to Borra.

Magbutay earlier said Jimenez would be given a chance to answer once the NUJP files its complaint.

However, Magbutay said that the media ban was improper since the canvassing has to be open to the public.

He added that Jimenez should have come up with an agreement with the media to ensure that the coverage would not be cumbersome.

Magbutay said he had ordered all election officers to be transparent in giving information to the public, especially the media.

Jimenez earlier explained that she imposed the ban because the journalists were unruly and that they disrupted the proceedings of the board of canvassers.

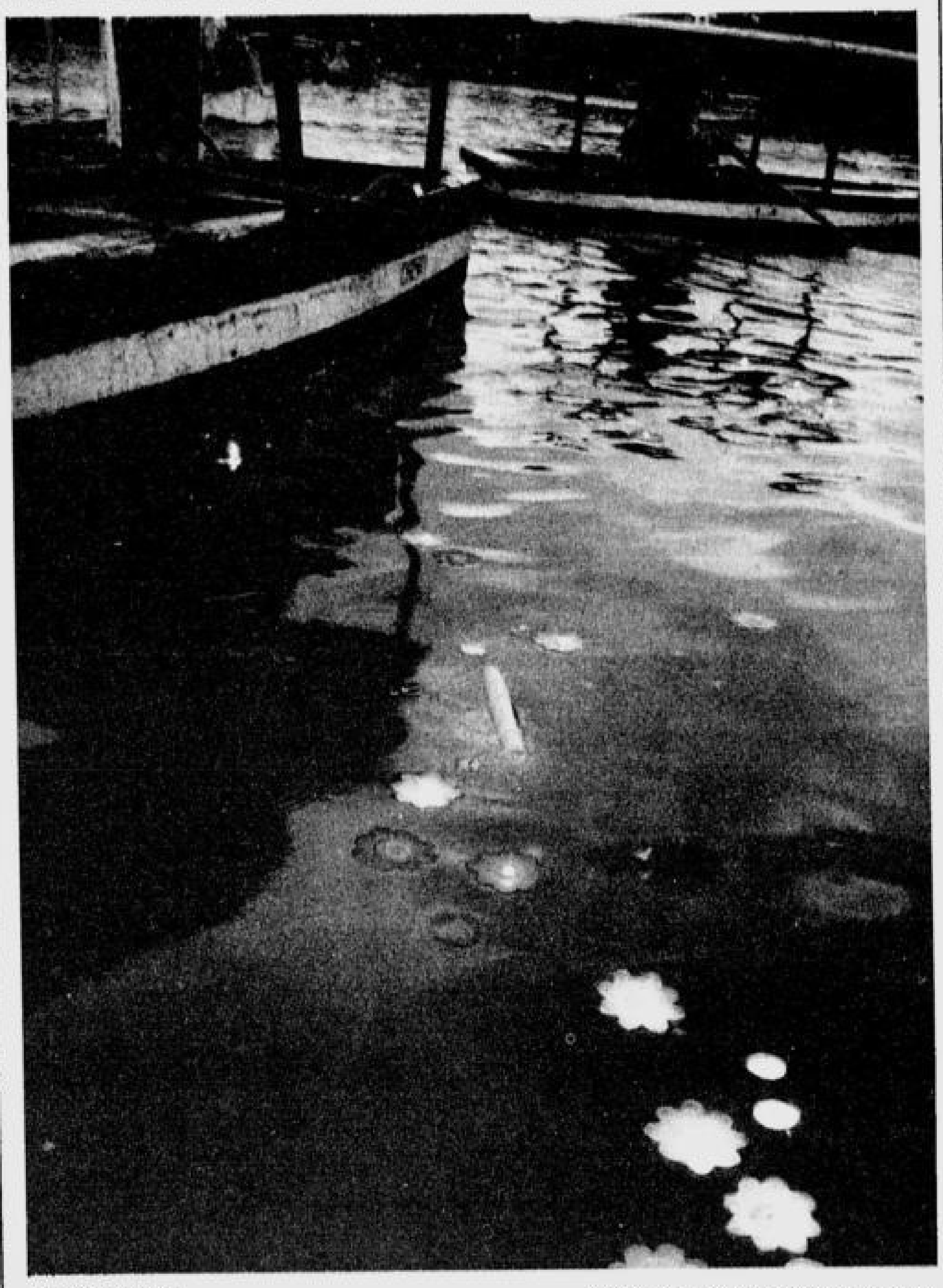
She had denied the request of two local television programs to cover the canvassing because she said she would feel uncomfortable.

Jimenez also said there was no need for media coverage because the proceedings were transparent to the lawyers and the watchers of political parties.

Magbutay, however, said the Comelec recognizes the media as it's information arm.

Last Saturday, journalists got back at her. She was entering the session hall of the Capiz Provincial Capitol to submit the results of the city canvassing to provincial election supervisor Wil Arceño when the journalists clapped loudly.

Jimenez was apparently piqued as she was seen crying outside the hall after handing over to Arceño the election results in Roxas City. She left without attending the proclamation of the winners.



MEMORIES VINCENT CABREZA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Braving strong rains, employees of Baguio's night club circuit light candles that they sent afloat at Burnham Lake, part of an annual effort to commemorate the city's AIDS-afflicted dead. Baguio currently records 23 AIDS afflicted or HIV positive residents.

Polls show Villafuerte feud won by son

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

PILI, CAMARINES SUR—AFTER ENduring a nasty feud with his father who mobilized resources, including supposedly voice-over tapes of his elder sister campaigning against him, incumbent Gov. Luis Raymund "LRay" Villafuerte emerged victorious against his opponent by threefolds.

According to the Commission on Election's final tabulation of election results, Governor Villafuerte, Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrat (Lakas-CMD) chair here, earned 409,380 votes over opponent Eduardo Pilapil of Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) who was fielded by his father Rep. Luis R. Villafuerte against his reëlection bid and got only 139,389 votes.

Governor Villafuerte has broken records when he achieved the biggest margin against an opponent in the gubernatorial race with 196,202 votes more than what Pilapil earned which even surpassed the record vote margin of 190,077 achieved by then governor and now Rep. Luis R. Villafuerte against movie star Nora Aunor in 2001.

The feud with his father had been triggered by differences between the two when Governor Villafuerte started appointing his own lieutenants in the provincial government of Camarines Sur that saw the separation of Congressman Villafuerte's trusted employees.

With several political and personal conflicts developing within the first term of Governor Villafuerte, the father-and-son relation further drifted apart until it imploded early this year as the election came nearer.

Finally, the father-son feud came to the attention of the media when Congressman Villafuerte openly criticized his son Governor Villafuerte for becoming "ingrate" and "disrespectful to his parents" through the local broadcast stations and networks.

But the governor denied his father's accusations against him as lies and that the issues that brought discord between him and his father pertained to administrative and executive decisions, policies and plans that the latter opposed.

He said that one issue that made Congressman Villafuerte mad was about his decision to stop the continued preferential treatment of a contractor whom he said had been enjoying the privilege of cornering projects without difficulty at the provincial government.

Governor Villafuerte also claimed that he was also at odds with Congressman Villafuerte regarding the continued proliferation of the illegal numbers game "jueteng" that he said had been under a jueteng lord named "Bogart."

Police probing whereabouts of suspect in bet's slaying

By Jolene R. Bulambot
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—POLICE ARE INVESTIGATING the possible flight abroad of Domingo Zaspa, the alleged mastermind in the May 2 killing of his rival, Sta. Fe mayoral aspirant Rogelio Ilustrisimo Sr.

Zaspa's family, meanwhile, insisted he was just in Cebu but avoiding public exposure allegedly due to threats to his life.

Delma Zaspa, a daughter of Domingo, did not leave the country but admitted that her mother, Norma, has instructed their caretaker and staff at Budyong Beach Resort in Sta. Fe on Bantayan Island to tell anyone looking for her father that he had left for the United States with some members of his family.

The reason behind the pretense was to evade those they feared would harm the older Zaspa because of death threats that he received, especially after Jennifer Ilustrisimo, Ilustrisimo Sr.'s daughter-in-law who replaced him in the mayoral race, was proclaimed winner.

"We need people to believe that my father left for our security. My father has been receiving death threats even before the election and the death threats worsened especially after the proclamation," Delma said.

Zaspa's daughter also said she suspected the death threats could have come from the camp of his father's political opponent.

"We believe that my father's life is in danger. He has been receiving text messages and calls threatening him. They even sent someone to check-in in our beach resort but we managed to preempt any attempt to his life. We were doing this to protect my father," she added.

She said her parents were still in Sta. Fe and that she had to come to Cebu City to prepare the libel charges that they were filing against incumbent Sta. Fe Mayor Roger Ilustrisimo Jr. and the police officials who implicated her father in the murder of Ilustrisimo Sr.

With the surrender of the suspected gunman, ex-cop Arnulfo Pigon, Delma said they would be vindicated since the truth would come out.

She also said that the Zaspa family welcomed any parallel investigation.

Mayor Ilustrisimo said he hoped the Cebu City Prosecutor's Office would soon resolve the murder complaint filed against Zaspa and Pigon and file the charges in court against those who killed his father.

He said his family has full trust and confidence in the investigation conducted by Task Force Ilustrisimo.

He said the family also hoped that the National Bureau of Investigation, which now has custody of Pigon, would turn over the alleged gunman to the police.

Police Deputy Director Geary Barias, who heads the investigation office in Camp Crame, said he has yet to coordinate with the NBI as to Pigon's detention.

Barias said Pigon is "technically a free person" since no warrant of arrest has been issued against him and the case filed against the suspect is still under preliminary investigation.

Winner in mayoral race faces term limit violation charges

SAN ANTONIO, ZAMBALES—FOR ALLEGEDly exceeding his term as mayor, newly proclaimed Mayor Romeo Lonzanida was charged by his closest rival with violating the rules on term limits.

In a complaint filed with the regional trial court in Iba town, losing mayoral candidate, Dr. Estela Antipolo, said Lonzanida has exceeded his term of office as mayor of San Antonio.

Antipolo said Lonzanida was mayor in 1988, 1992, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2004 and now 2007.

Three other residents also filed a complaint seeking the disqualification of Lonzanida for exceeding his term.

Ernie del Rosario, Corazon Canonizado and Zoraida Fonseca asked the court to stop Lonzanida from assuming his post as they claimed that it would be his sixth term as mayor.

"This case is a clear and outright violation of ...Section 43 of the Local Government Code (Republic Act No. 7160) stating that 'no local elective official shall serve for more than three consecutive terms in the same position,'" they said.

In her complaint, Antipolo said: "Ironically, this is a fact in our town where the seemingly endless cycle of doubtful events continues to prevail in our place even at this time."

"I stand by my townmates' prayers and resoluteness for me to pursue truth, justice and freedom in our place," she said.

The INQUIRER could not reach Lonzanida for comment. But his staff said they would answer the charges in the proper forum.

Lonzanida got 7,687 votes in the May 14 elections while Antipolo received 4,615 votes. *Cesar Villa, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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Conference Agenda
8:30am Registration & Exhibition
9:30am Welcome
9:40am Opening Address
9:55am AutoCAD 2008 - A Designer's Dream
10:55am Autodesk Industry Solutions Demo
11:55am Autodesk Subscription Program
12:15pm Lunch Break / Industry Breakout

Manufacturing Solutions Breakouts
1:00pm - 5:00pm

Building Solutions Breakouts
1:15pm - 5:00pm

Infrastructure Solutions Breakouts
1:30pm - 5:00pm

Solutions Exhibition
by Autodesk's strategic partners
8:30am - 5:30pm

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Zambo ecozone gambling surprises Church, execs

By Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—CHURCH and city government officials here expressed surprise over the reported operation of on-line gaming or casino inside a government property which is about 22 km west of the city proper.

Msgr. David Alonso, spokesperson of the Zamboanga City Archdiocese, expressed surprise saying "it's my first time to hear that (on-line casino) it's operating in our city."

"We, the Church in this city, are not aware about its existence."

Alonso admitted to the INQUIRER that was his first time to learn about the existence of Philippine E-gaming Jurisdiction Incorporated (PeJI).

PeJI maintains an office at Technical Enterprise Building B located inside the compound of the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone (ZSEZ) and Freeport in Barangay San Ramon this city.

Cloudy details

Based on its website, PeJI is "powered by Republic of the Philippines' Zamboanga Special Economic Zone (ZSEZ) and has the Master License to regulate and control eGaming and other gaming related activities conducted within and from the Zamboanga Special Economic Zone (ZSEZ)."

PeJI receives and processes all applications for and awards eGaming licenses to business operators. It regulates and monitors all activities inside the ZSEZ.

"PeJI is engaged in the active pursuit of the development of gaming and e-gaming businesses in the Zamboanga Special Economic Zone (ZSEZ)," said its website.

Alonso said he will inform Archbishop Romulo Valles regarding the existence of on-line gaming, but "as far as the Church is concern, any form of gambling is unacceptable, even if it's Internet based."

If the Church is unaware of its operation, some city government officials are either informed with sketchy details or have no idea at all about the operations.

Proposals

At first, City Mayor Celso Lobregat and Vice Mayor Maria Isabelle Climaco told the INQUIRER that they don't have any idea about the operation of any online gaming or casino in this city.

But when they were asked about the online gaming inside ZSEZ premises, Lobregat said there are some applicants but not for local players but foreign clients "and it was just a proposal nothing final yet."

"There should be locators (foreign investors) and they made sure during the last meeting I attended a long time ago, this (online gaming) it's only for foreign clients," Lobregat said. He sits as a board member of the ZSEZ.

Lobregat said he cannot say who are the operators and foreign investors "better ask the chairman of the ecozone, these were just working proposals, we emphasized with them during the presentation of the proposal that we don't want gambling operation in this city."

Like Lobregat, Climaco also said that no particular online gaming, or gambling, exists in this city, yet when asked about the ecozone, she recalled that there was a presentation before by ZSEZ vice chair Christopher Arnuco.

She admitted having limited knowledge about the ecozone's online gaming. "It was presented to us before, it was just a proposal."

Surprise, surprise

Councilor Jose Manuel Dalipe, now elected vice mayor here, said ZSEZ chair Georgina Yu should have knowledge of the online gaming.

"Actually I was really surprised. I have no idea about it," said Councilor Luis Climaco.

Climaco said he found out that two gaming operators are now inside the ecozone—I-Global and Filwave.

"How come the ecozone and the board didn't make public its operation," Climaco adds.

29 Western Visayas schools seize chance to increase tuition

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—WITH THE CEILING on tuition increase lifted, at least 29 private schools in Western Visayas will increase matriculation fees when the school year opens next week.

The schools will implement increases ranging from 5 percent to 15.05 percent, or an average of 8.46 percent, according to the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) regional office.

Thirteen of the schools are in Iloilo. These are the Central Philippine University, Colegio de San Jose, Colegio del Sagrado Corazon de Jesus, Iloilo Doctors' College, Interface Computer College, John B. Lacson Colleges Foundation-Arevalo, John B. Lacson Colleges Foundation-Molo, St. Paul University of Iloilo, St. Therese-MTC Colleges-La Fiesta, St. Therese-MTC Colleges-Tigbauan, St. Therese-MTC Colleges-Magdalo, St. Vincent Ferrer Seminary, and the University of San Agustin.

Ten schools in Negros Occidental will increase their tuition: Binalbagan Catholic College, Central Negros College, Colegio de San Agustin, Fellowship Baptist College, John B. Lacson College Foundation-Bacolod, La Consolacion College-Bacolod, La Consolacion College-La Carlota, Riverside College, University of St. La Salle and the VMA Global College.

In Capiz, those raising tuition by five percent are the College of St. John, Filamer Christian College and St. Anthony College of Roxas City.

Two schools in Aklan—Garcia College of Technology and STI College-Kalibo—will also charge more. In Antique, the Pandan Bay Institute will increase tuition by 13.6 percent.

Twenty-six of the 29 schools will also raise other school fees.

Four schools—West Negros College in Bacolod City, University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, University of Iloilo and Fellowship Baptist College in Kabankalan City in Negros Occidental—will not raise tuition but only other school fees.

Dr. Alan Lena, in-charge of tuition and other fees of the CHEd regional office, said she was implementing a Feb. 20 memorandum issued by CHEd Chair Dr. Carlito Puno which suspended the CHEd guideline that pegged the maximum limit of increase in tuition to the national inflation rate.

Puno earlier announced that the commission had lifted for one year the ceiling on tuition increases, allowing around 1,200 private schools and 112 state universities and colleges in the country to set their rates for the coming school year.

The suspension seeks to enable the schools to improve their global competitiveness, he said.

The CHEd will conduct a study on the appropriate tuition scheme this school year and plans to adopt a formula using absolute figures in determining tuition increase, instead of percentage.

Puno earlier said he did not expect tuition to shoot up despite the lifting of the limit.

But youth groups said the actual implementation of increases in the 29 schools belied the CHEd claims.

"No assurance of the CHEd and the government could stop these schools from increasing their fees just to ensure their profits at the expense of the students and their parents. The government should instead impose more control and increase the budget allotted for education instead of lifting the tuition ceiling," said Rizza Joy Mapa.

GOVERNOR
LANAO DEL SUR

COURAGE REM ZAMORA
Teachers sit on ballot boxes inside the provincial capitol gymnasium in Marawi City before the start of canvassing. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police (PNP) said Saturday's conduct of the mid-term special polls in Lanao del Sur was "comparatively peaceful and orderly."

NPA says it seized 38 guns from Army, killed 31 troops

LUCENA CITY—THE NEW PEOPLE'S Army claimed it seized a total of 38 firearms from government forces from May 3 to May 16.

In an e-mail statement, Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said at least 28 of the seized firearms were high-powered weapons, including an M-60 machine gun.

A report published in Ang Bayan, the CPP's official news organ, said at least 31 government soldiers, including policemen, were killed in action and 37 others were wounded during the same period.

The CPP, through its armed wing, the NPA, has been waging guerrilla warfare in the countryside for nearly 40 years now.

Responding to the CPP's call to step up tactical offensives, the NPA launched more than a dozen attacks in at least seven provinces in the last two weeks, according to Rosal.

He said the communist rebels, which the CPP claimed to be operating in more than 100 guerrilla fronts across the country, lost only one guerrilla and suffered two wounded casualties.

But the spokesman of the military's Southern Luzon Command based in Camp Nakar here belittled the rebel leader's allegation.

According to Army Lt. Col. Roderick Parayno, the military forces in Southern Tagalog and Bicol regions only lost five soldiers and one militiaman since April this year.

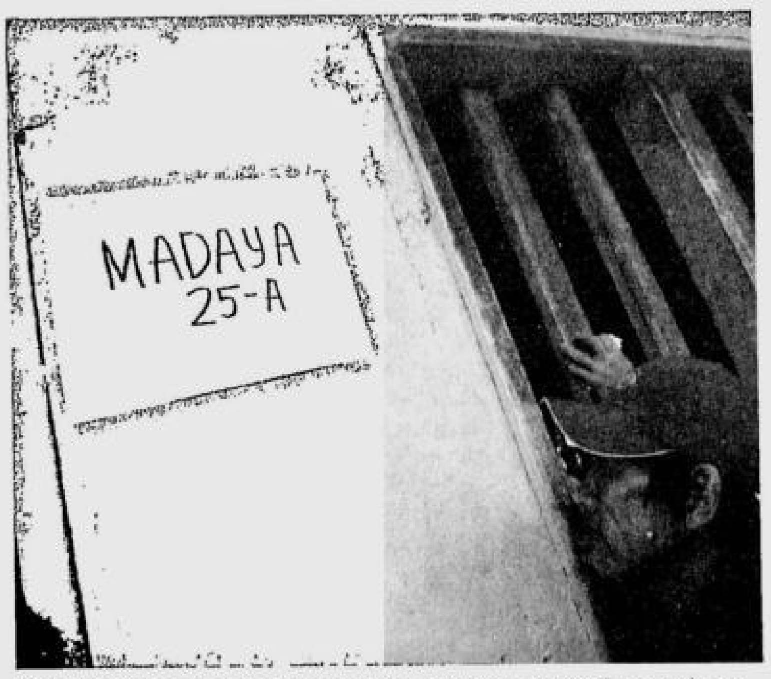
He said, though, that most government casualties in Southern Luzon were policemen who were killed in ambuscades and assassinations.

Parayno said the military did not lose any firearm in the same period.

He said the military even recovered 14 small caliber guns and five high powered firearms from rebels.

Parayno said the NPA claims were part of the guerrillas' propaganda. *Delfin Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Eastern Visayas winners include 2 widows



VOTING takes place in Lanao del Sur, a scene repeated many times over nationwide last May 14. The sign, which translates into cheater, indicates the name of a voting precinct. REM ZAMORA

By Vicente S. Labro
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—WINNERS of mayoral positions in Eastern Visayas include two women, whose politician-husbands were gunned down before the elections, and several newcomers.

Lucia Astorga, wife of slain Mayor Benito Astorga of Daram, Samar, won over two opponents in the mayoral race in that island town. It was the second time she was elected Daram mayor.

An assassin bullet killed her husband during a fiesta dance in Barangay Birawan in Daram on Jan. 24.

Benito had completed three consecutive terms and his wife, who won a three-year term, replaced him in 1998. He ran and won again in 2001 and 2004, and had planned to seek another term in the May 14 polls.

Lucia, a physician, had served as municipal health officer. She defeated the vice mayor of her husband, Bartolome Figueroa, and a municipal councilor, Arthur Losa.

Implicated

The National Bureau of Investigation has implicated Figueroa in the killing.

Another widow of a slain politician, Susan Parilla, a neophyte, won in the mayoral race in Naval town, the post that her husband had last sought but failed to get in 2004.

Her husband, former Biliran Gov. Danilo Parilla, 57, was shot dead while disembarking from a ship at the port of Cebu in September last year.

In Tacloban City, former Rep. Alfred Romualdez won by a wide margin over his opponent in the mayoral race. He will replace his father, Mayor Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez.

Several newcomers also won mayoral seats in the region. Among them were Michael Cari, son of Leyte Rep. Carmen Cari (fifth district), who will soon replace his brother, Mayor Jose Carlos Cari, of Baybay, Leyte; Mayor-elect Nancy Grey of San Jorge, Samar, the wife of a losing congressional candidate in Samar's first district; and Mayor-elect Dr. Rustico Balderian of Tabontabon, Leyte, a physician-businessman in the United States and owner of a nursing school in his hometown.

16-year-old reb arrested; another gives up

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE MILITARY arrested on Sunday a 16-year-old girl, who they alleged is a member of the New People's Army (NPA), in Leyte town.

Five days earlier, a 17-year-old suspected rebel surrendered to the military.

Lt. Col. Lope Dagoy, commanding officer of the 19th Infantry Battalion, based in Kananga, Leyte, said his men, led by Lt. Rod Vincent Babira, arrested the 16-year-old, who is three months pregnant, at her house in Barangay Tag-abaca, Leyte town, last Sunday around 10 p.m.

Dagoy said the arrest of the minor was made with a warrant of arrest issued by Regional Trial Court Judge Apolinario Buaya, based in Ormoc City.

The judge issued the warrant against Cristy on Nov. 3 last year for rebellion charges filed by Dagoy against officials and members of the Mt. Amandawen of the Northern Leyte Front Command. The Northern Leyte Front Command Mt. Amandawen leader Apolinario Opo was arrested last Holy Friday here in the city.

Dagoy said informants led them to the girl.

Punishment

But the girl, who allegedly belonged to the medical and education committees of the group, denied that she was a member of the NPA, Dagoy said.

However, Dagoy said he learned from the informant, who was once an NPA member, that Cristy could have been asked to leave the group as punishment for getting impregnated by her boyfriend, an alleged active NPA member.

Dagoy said a certain Lea de la Cruz, whom he identified as head of the NPA's Northern Leyte Front Command, who recruited the girl.

The girl had been in the movement for more than a year before her capture last Sunday, Dagoy added.

A 17-year-old young man, also suspected to be an NPA member, surrendered to the military. He expressed his desire to surrender through the mayor of Albuera, also in Leyte, Dagoy said.

Albuera Mayor Sixto de la Victoria, in turn, informed Dagoy on May 26 of the planned surrender of the teenage guerrilla.

The mayor learned about the plight of the 17-year-old minor from the village chief of Talisayon, also in Albuera, where the boy's family lives.

Difficult life

The juvenile allegedly joined the NPA when he was just 16-years-old, Dagoy said.

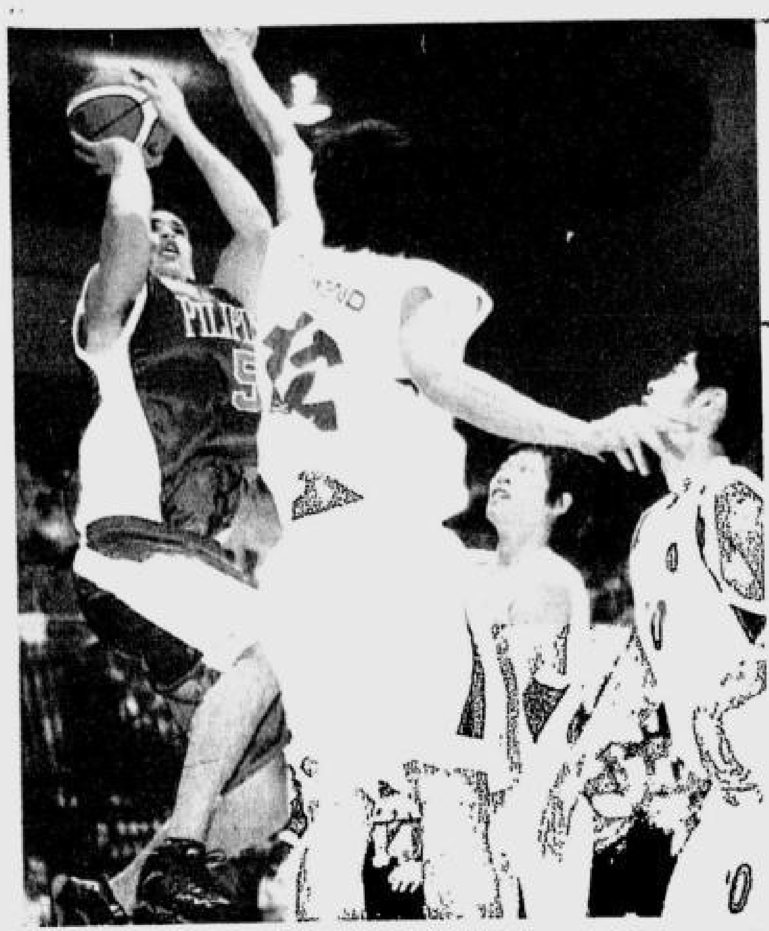
The boy buried his M-16 Armalite rifle in a mountainous village in Carigara town, also in Leyte, he said.

"According to the teenager, life in the mountains is becoming difficult for them. They were always on the run. And he realized that he could either be captured or die anytime because of our relentless campaign against their group," Dagoy said.

Roy and Cristy were detained temporarily at the military camp but the two would be turned over to the regional office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development based here.

"The capture and the surrender of these two minors are proof that the communist group is still using minors in their campaign against the government," said Dagoy.

Late SPORTS



DANNY Seigle mocks a Thai triple team with a fadeaway jumper off Ratdech Kruatiwa during their lopsided game yesterday.

RP caps title sweep with win over Thais

By Francis Ochoa

RATCHABURI, THAILAND—THE NEWS echoed throughout Sunday night's post-game dinner, and Asi Taulava wore a wide grin on his face the moment he heard it.

Immediately, the 6-foot-9 center placed a phone call to his boss, telecommunications magnate Manny V. Pangilinan, and relayed the good news.

"We're the champions, boss," said Taulava, after learning that Indonesia had beaten host Thailand, 65-55, and rendered the Filipinos game against the Thais Monday afternoon moot.

"But we're still going out and try to beat Thailand."

The Nationals struggled for a half to do that.

They trailed by eight early in the first quarter—the biggest deficit they faced in the tournament—and, for the first time, were beaten at the end of the period.

But the Nationals swept the Southeast Asian Basketball Association men's championship anyway with a tournament-ending 96-76 rout of Thailand at the Ratchaburi gym.

STANDINGS	W	L
RP-SMC	4	0
Indonesia	3	1
Malaysia	2	2
Thailand	1	3
Singapore	0	4

Hard as it was to find motivation to beat the hosts senseless like it did other teams in its first three games by an average of 44 points, the Thais made it even more difficult.

Heavy dose of hot shooting

The hosts provided a heavy dose of hot shooting and a little mix of roughhousing that forced gunners Mark Caguioa and Danny Seigle out of synch in the early part of the game.

Piyapong Piroon hit his shots from the outside, beefy center Chaiwat Kaedum made his baby jumpers, and the Thais threw in hard fouls and jutted elbows on the way to a 24-23 edge.

The Nationals then scored 17 straight points in the second quarter—a 10-minute stretch that, for the tournament, has become their personal playground—and coach Chot Reyes' worries dissipated after a 52-41 halftime lead that left him to ponder the future.

"We didn't even have the game to beat Chinese Taipei," Reyes said after the less-than-impressive victory. "Now, we have two months to get to a level [to compete with other Asian powerhouses] and we really have to give it our best shot."

And that may force a few roster changes.

"It's no secret that we're really taking a good look at Willie Miller, Kelly Williams and Gabe Norwood," said Reyes.

Norwood was the starting point guard for George Mason University when it reached the final four of the US NCAA two years ago.

The win, the country's fourth straight in the tournament, was merely icing to what the Philippines had already accomplished.

The RP-San Miguel squad had already booked a slot to the Olympic qualifier in Tokushima, Japan, after beating Malaysia the night before and engraved its name on the Crown Prince Cup hours later when Indonesia defeated Thailand.

The Indons later finished second at 3-1 to join the Filipinos in Japan. Malaysia (2-2) finished third over Thailand (1-3). Singapore was dead last at 0-4.

"We started the tournament talking about burning our boats," Reyes said, a reference to Mexico discoverer Hernando Cortez. "It was either we win the title or find another place to live, because we definitely were not going home without the title."

Win the title they did.

The Nationals erected a 25-point lead against the Thais twice in the third period, the last at 75-50 with 2:48 left in the third. But the hosts unloaded an 11-0 run, crept to within 11 at 77-66, and stayed with the RP-San Miguel five as much as they could to also win the fourth quarter by two points, 21-19.

Caguioa drained a triple, Seigle added two free throws and Taulava dominated the paint as the Nationals pulled away for good in the fourth period.

The scores:

RP-SAN MIGUEL 96—Seigle 22, Caguioa 18, Taulava 16, Alapag 12, Honliveros 9, Ritualo 9, Villanueva 6, Raymundo 4, De Ocampo 0, Pennisi 0, Helterbrand 0, Canaleta 0.

THAILAND 76—Piyapong 11, Ratdech 11, Chaiwat 10, Attaporn 9, Mana 9, Darongphan 8, Jakkpapan 8, Sopon 7, Boonchai 3, Thongchai 0, Kannat 0, Nontabob 0.

Quarters: 23-24, 52-41, 77-55, 96-76

SEAG cage crown a cinch for Pinoys

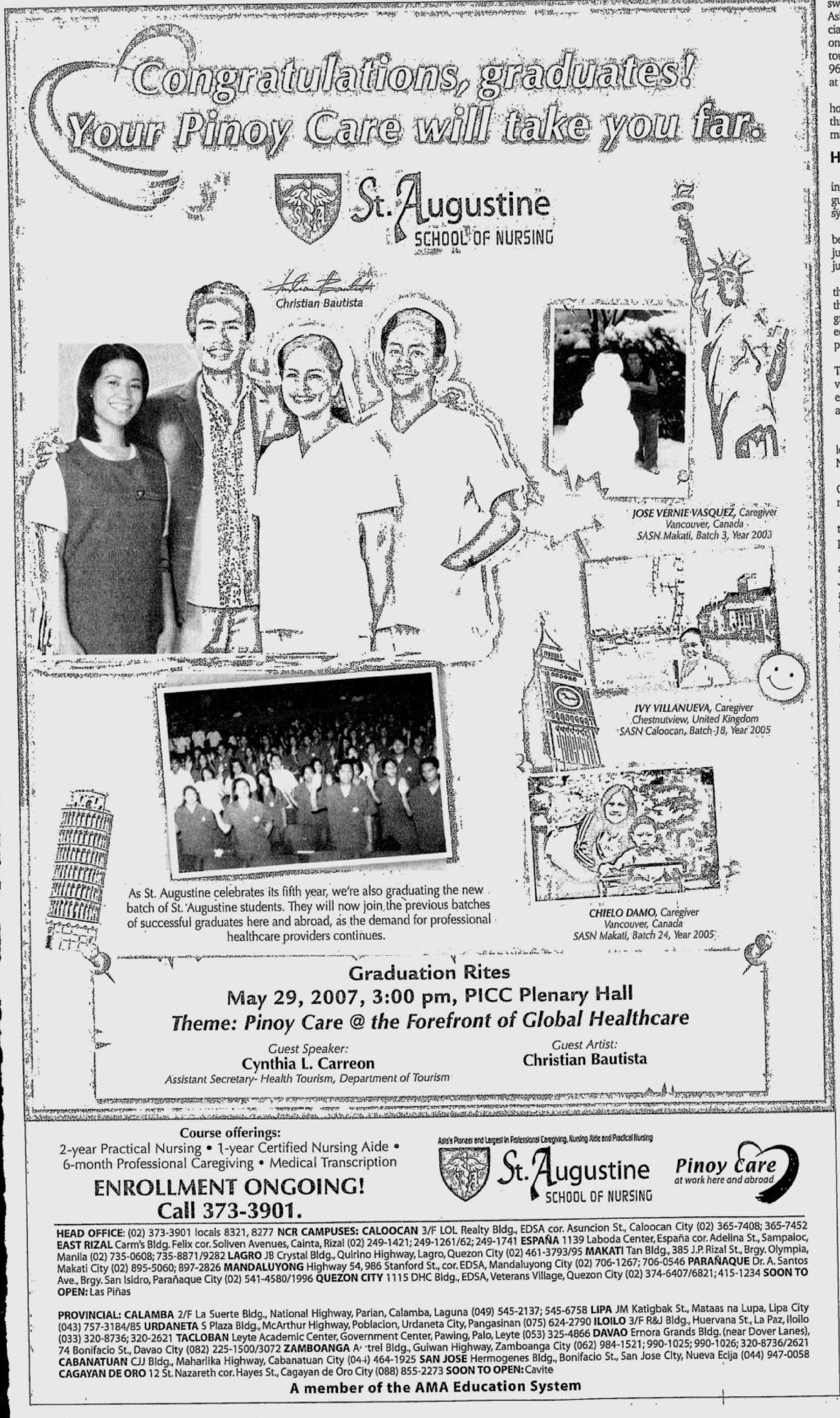
RATCHABURI, THAILAND—THE WORDS scrawled across the whiteboard inside the Philippine team puts in a nutshell the sense of triumph felt by the pricey squad Sunday night at the Ratchaburi gymnasium here.

"Mission accomplished," was what Chot Reyes hurriedly scribbled to kick of his post-game huddle with the Nationals.

And as much as the country has reason to celebrate over finally making official what was anyway a preordained trip to the Fiba Asia men's championship in Japan—the continent's Olympic qualifier—there was also reason for three guys to celebrate.

Coaches Junel Baculi and Louie Alas, along with Harbour Centre's Albert Tirona had completed their reconnaissance mission here and happily reported that the country's chances to regain the gold medal in the Southeast Asian Games looks good.

"It can be done with an all-amateur squad," said Baculi. *Francis Ochoa*



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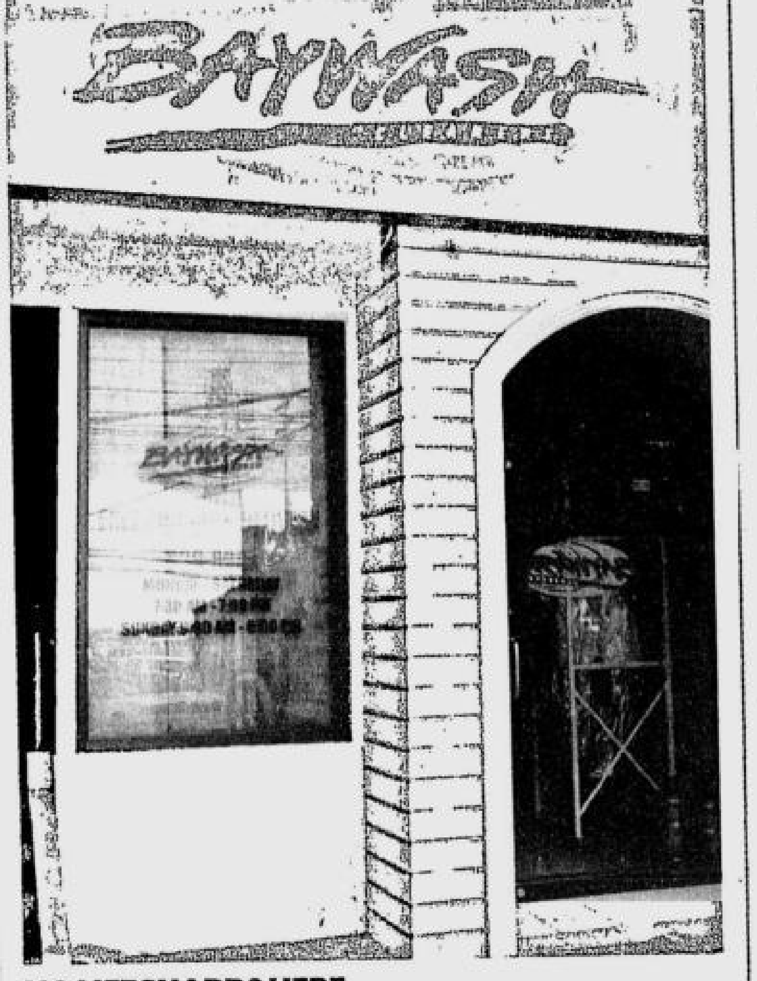

NO LIFEGUARDS HERE
Don't expect to find actress Pamela Anderson in this laundry shop on C-5 Road in Libis, Quezon City. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

CA drops charges against 7 Chinese in shabu lab case

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS ACQUITTED SEVEN Chinese earlier convicted of drug charges, and even scolded the police for conducting an improper search of their house, saying the end never justifies the means.

The appellate court last week said the "improper" search in 2002 of the Chinese nationals' house in San Juan, which was suspected to be a shabu laboratory, violated the constitutional guarantee against unlawful arrests and illegal searches and rendered the evidence gathered against the suspects inadmissible for being "fruits of the poisonous tree."

Because of the absence of evidence, the court, in its May 22 decision, reversed the ruling of the Pasig Regional Trial Court convicting the seven Chinese of possessing illegal drugs and bringing them into the country.

The appellate court, with Associate Justices Jose Sabio Jr. as ponente and Jose Reyes Jr. and Myrna Vidal concurring, also ordered the suspects' release from detention.

The seven—identified as Cai Xihe, Tian Sang, Cai Dushi, Yan Qizhong, Lao Chi Diak, King Cheng and Lim Chamou—were earlier sentenced to reclusion perpetua and fined P5 million each. The police said it recovered more than 800 grams of shabu in their house, along with equipment believed to be used in the manufacture of illegal drugs.

The suspects had denied the charges against them. The operation was conducted by the Anti-Trafficking Division of the Philippine National Police's Narcotics Group.

"With the persistence of nagging doubts surrounding the implementation of the search warrant, it is evident that the prosecution has failed to discharge its burden of proof and overcome their constitutional presumption of innocence. It is thus not only the appellants' right to be freed; it is even more, this court's constitutional duty to acquit them," the appellate court said. It added that it had "agonized" over the case because of the amount of illegal drugs that were reportedly recovered, but had to acquit the Chinese suspects out of respect for their rights.

The appellate court pointed out that the administrators of justice could not expect people to follow the law if they do not fully protect people's rights.

It also said some lawmen, prosecutors and judges would ignore illegal searches as long as the police show evidence of the crime, regardless of how these were obtained.

"This kind of attitude condones lawbreaking in the name of law enforcement. Ironically, it only fosters the more rapid breakdown of our system of justice, and the eventual denigration of society," the appellate court said.

It warned the police that they should respect the rights of people who are subjects of their arrest in order not to jeopardize their own operations.

"While this court appreciates and encourages the efforts of law enforcers to uphold the law and to preserve the peace and security of society, we nevertheless admonish them to act with deliberate care and within the parameters set by the Constitution and the law. Truly, the end never justifies the means," it said.

According to the appellate court, the search of the Chinese nationals' San Juan residence violated the rules of court which state that the search must be conducted in the presence of the house owner. It said that while the Chinese were indeed inside the house, they were not allowed to witness the actual search of the premises. Instead, they were herded into a room.

It added that the presence of barangay officials in the search was no excuse for not requiring the presence of the house owners since the latter were available.

The appellate court pointed out that it could not presume regularity in the police's performance of their official duty against the constitutionally protected rights of individuals, "as zeal in the pursuit of criminals cannot ennoble the use of arbitrary methods that the Constitution itself abhors."

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MJ cared for wife's welfare—lawyer

By Julie M. Aurelio

SHE'S YOURS.

Saying his client only wanted his wife to be cured of her addiction to drugs, the lawyer of Mark Jimenez yesterday said Carol Castañeda-Jimenez's caretakers can now keep her for as long as they wish.

"Mr. Jimenez has been deprived of the chance to take care of his wife. Mr. Jimenez told me, 'If they want her, they can have her,'" Frank Chavez said in a phone interview.

At around 9:30 p.m. Friday, agents of the National Bureau of Investigation barged into the Silvercrest Foundation, a drug rehabilitation facility in Las Piñas City, to "rescue" Castañeda.

Castañeda, Jimenez's estranged second wife, had been confined in the facility since May 16 after eight men allegedly abducted her in Makati City.

The NBI, assisted by the Las Piñas City police, conducted the operation based on the rescue order issued by a Pasig City family court upon the request of Castaneda's family.

Chavez said Jimenez expressed sadness over his wife's release from the rehab facility. According to the former Manila congressman, he only wanted Castañeda to be rehabilitated.

"I just wanted to give Carol the opportunity to be healed. When I was jailed in the United States, no one monitored her use of drugs. Obviously she has become drug dependent," Chavez quoted his client as saying. "So they can keep her, since they have taken her," the lawyer added.

But Chavez pointed out that a chance at reconciliation between husband and wife was not far-fetched.

"It means to say that a reconciliation between Mr. Jimenez and his wife is there. But I cannot say if that will happen. That is up to Mr. Jimenez," the lawyer said.

He also criticized some unnamed parties for sensationalizing the case, which he called a "private affair. This is just a family matter blown out of proportion by some quarters," Chavez added.

Earlier, he said they were studying the filing of serious illegal detention charges against the NBI. To be included in the complaint are Castaneda's lawyer Lorna Kapunan, her sister Rose Flaminiano, Jimenez's son Virgilio Crespo and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

Chavez added that they were set to file a motion for reconsideration to modify the temporary protection order issued against Jimenez. He cited in particular a directive for Jimenez to vacate the Essensa condominium in Taguig City where he and Castañeda lived.

"That is unconstitutional. No one can deprive another of his home without undergoing due process," Chavez pointed out.

Work on QC underpass over by June

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE P87-MILLION UNDERPASS CONNECTING the Quezon Memorial Circle to the Quezon City Hall will finally be completed by the end of next month.

"We expect that the underpass will be passable by the end of June, with 90 percent of the first phase now completed," City Engineer Joselito Cabungcal told the INQUIRER in an interview.

He explained that the project has two phases: The first involves the completion of the tunnel while the second phase calls for the construction of the tunnel entrance and exit.

"There will also be an elevator for the disabled," the city engineer added.

Cabungcal said the underpass was constructed as an alternative to an elevated pedestrian overpass, which could have destroyed the area's aesthetic aspect.

"There have also been accidents with people crossing the road to get to the Quezon Memorial Circle or back to city hall," he said, adding that the circle is popular among fitness enthusiasts who like to jog and families who go on picnics on weekends.

According to the official, they would open all the lanes in front of city hall at the end of the week, after completing the curing period for the cement.

"We had to close half the road in front of the memorial circle, then the other half in front of the city hall because of the construction," Cabungcal explained.

He added, however, that the loading and unloading area for jeepneys, which was relocated to a spot next to the National Housing Authority, would not be moved back to its old location in front of city hall.

Bonus awaits Makati public school teachers

By DJ Yap

THE MAKATI GOVERNMENT IS ready to reward its public school teachers with a P2,000 one-time bonus a week before the opening of classes.

City officials yesterday announced the appropriation of a lump sum of P5.64 million to cover incentives for Makati's 2,819 public school teachers.

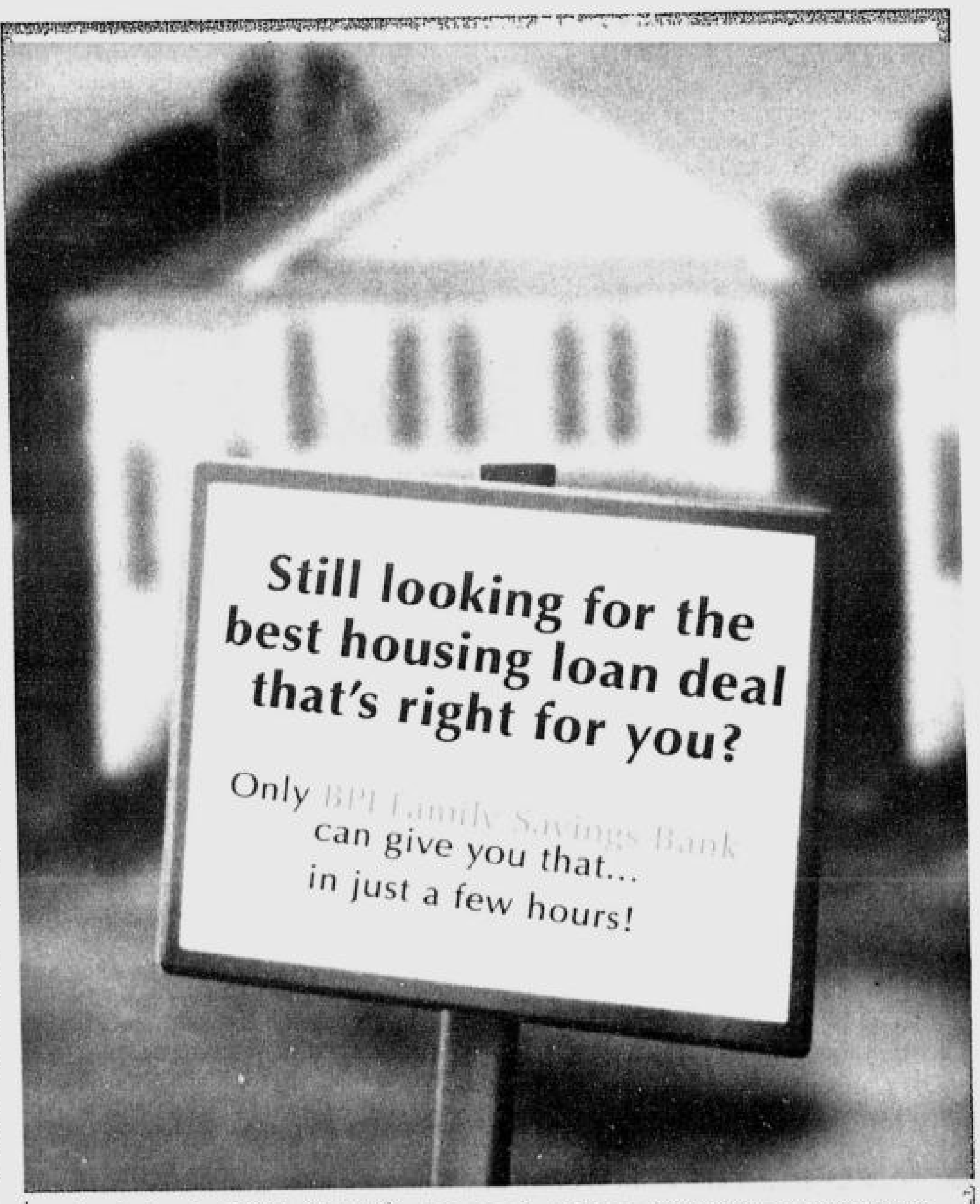
The cash benefits, Mayor-elect Jejomar Binay said, are intended to "uplift" the teachers' morale, as more and more of them are opting to migrate to other countries for greener pastures.

"Public school teachers are among the grossly underpaid sectors in government service. As such, the city government of Makati is doing everything within its means to provide them with additional benefits," he said.

Binay noted that many teachers seek jobs overseas because of the lack of opportunities for them here, limiting their means to provide for their families amid the rising cost of living.

At present, public school teachers in Makati enjoy a clothing allowance of P4,000, a personal economic relief allowance of P500, an additional compensation P1,500, a P300 chalk allowance and an annual cash gift of P5,000. They also get bonuses at the end of each year.

Of the city's public school teachers, 2,241 are from the national government, 492 are contractual workers and 86 are regular city employees.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Police launch manhunt for gas station thieves

By Tina G. Santos

MANILA POLICE ARE LOOKING for nine men who fired upon a van owned by Petron Corp. and then stole the P900,000 in cash hand—carried by the oil company's employees yesterday.

Pablo Remoto, 40, the driver of the dark green Nissan Urvan, was hit in the right arm and was taken to the Philippine General Hospital for treatment as a result of the incident. The other passengers of the van were unhurt.

The incident took place at around 6:30 a.m. yesterday at the corner of Pedro Gil and San Marcelino Streets, near a Petron gas station in Ermita, Manila.

Maria Christina Cruz, 40, who works as a secretary for Petron, told authorities that she, service attendant Edeliza Cruz and another employee, Erlinda Macaraeg, were on board the van when their path was blocked by the suspects who were riding on motorcycles.

The suspects then fired on the van's windshield, hitting Remoto.

The armed men next smashed one of the vehicle's windows and took the P900,000 in cash inside a used juice tetra pack, she said.

According to Cruz, the money was the gas station's accumulated earnings they had just picked up from the house of the gas station owner in Quezon City.

She added that they were bringing the cash to the gas station in Ermita where it would be picked up by a bank's armored vehicle for deposit.

Apart from the money, the suspects also took their cash and valuables, including their cell phones, Cruz said.

Authorities have already released artist sketches of two of the suspects.

One of them was described by witnesses as between 30 and 35 years old, 5'5" to 5'6" in height and sporting a military-like haircut. Another was described as between 25 and 30 years old, 5'6" to 5'7" tall and wearing a cap.

Police said yesterday's incident was the third time that the gas station had been robbed.

THE PASSENGERS inside this van were robbed by nine armed men in Ermita, Manila yesterday. One of the victims, Ma. Christina Cruz (inset), was in shock after the incident.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Down with streamers, court tells MMDA anew

By Kristine L. Alave

THE METROPOLITAN MANILA DEVELOPMENT Authority (MMDA) has been ordered—for the second time—by a Pasig City court to remove its streamers on the Metro Rail Transit 3, saying it is in violation of an earlier court ruling and of the rights of the advertising firm authorized to put up billboards on the MRT 3.

In a May 9 cease and desist order, Judge Luis Tongco of the Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 155, called for the "immediate dismantling and removal of the subject MMDA banners and other similar MMDA paraphernalia installed or to be installed on any Edsa MRT 3 structure …"

The judge issued the order after Trackworks Rail Transit Advertising, Vending and Promotions Inc. accused the MMDA of putting up banners and streamers on the MRT 3 announcing that it is prohibited to post advertisements on the structures of the railway transit system.

Trackworks said the MMDA's recent actions violated the court ruling in October 2005 prohibiting it from installing its own posters or dismantling the ad firm's banners. The court reiterated its ruling in September 2006.

Earlier this month, the Court of Appeals ordered the MMDA to stop dismantling billboards on the MRT 3. According to the court, apart from the fact that the MRT 3 is private property, its owner, the Metro Rail Transit Corp. Ltd., has authorized Trackworks to put up ads on the railway transit system.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, meanwhile, told the INQUIRER that he has yet to see a copy of the court ruling.

Fastfood restaurant loses ₱.7M to robbers

By Jeannette I. Andrade

FOUR MOTORCYLE-RIDING MEN men yesterday pulled off a daring mid-morning heist on E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon City, fleeing with a loot of P700,000—a fastfood restaurant's earnings for the weekend.

A representative of the restaurant in Barangay Sta. Cecilia had just turned over the money to Andy Paul Tecson, a teller of Chinabank, when the robbers arrived in front of the establishment on board two motorcycles at 10:45 a.m.

As soon as Tecson stepped outside the restaurant, two of the suspects went up to him. One pointed a cal. .45 pistol at the bank teller while another took the cash which was inside a small duffel bag.

The suspects then fled, along with their two other cohorts who served as lookouts.

Tecson, who regularly picks up the fastfood restaurant's earnings for depositing in his bank, said it was the first time he stepped out of the bank without a security guard, adding that the bank was just beside the restaurant.

QCPD chief Senior Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula said investigators are eyeing the possibility of an inside job.

He added that he has ordered his men to conduct follow up operations by putting up checkpoints to corner the suspects.

DID YOU KNOW

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture, which holds office on Elliptical Road in Diliman, Quezon City, is the principal government agency responsible for the promotion of agricultural development. It had its beginnings on June 23, 1898, days after the declaration of Philippine independence, when a presidential proclamation created the Department of Agriculture and Manufacturing.

It has undergone reorganization through the years, and was previously renamed Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture and Commerce, and Ministry of Agriculture and Food. The last reorganization took place in 1987 under the Aquino government.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

OBITUARIES

Jess Fernandez; 52

POLITICAL ACTIVIST JESUS "JESS" F. FERNANDez passed away on May 26 from multiple organ failure resulting from complications brought about by lung cancer. He was 52 years old.

A native of Pangasinan, Fernandez was a member of the Alpha Sigma Fraternity and a graduate of political science from the University of the Philippines, Diliman.

He was a political activist and revolutionary for over 30 years. He joined the national democratic movement in 1972 and became deeply involved in organizing workers, urban poor, youth and students, peasants and other sectors.

Fernandez was a senior member of the staff of Sen. Gregorio Honasan from 1998 to 2004 and was among the leaders in the presidential bid of Fernando Poe Jr. in 2004.

He is survived by wife Niva Gonzales and children Nicholas Dominador and Hazel Inessa. His remains now lie at the Funeraria Paz in Araneta Ave. Cremation will be on May 31 at 11 a.m.

N. Ricamora; 64

NARCISO "ARCEL" RICAMORA, 64 YEARS old, of Baliuag, Bulacan, died on May 24 of a heart attack. He is survived by wife Leticia; children Ariel, Arlene, Analie, Arnold and Leah; grandchildren Chane, Gillian, Ingrid and Ice; brother Samuel and sisters Lorna and Tosa.

His body lies at their residence on J.P. Rizal Street in Tarcan, Baliuag, Bulacan. Interment is set today at United Memorial Park, Taal, Pulilan, Bulacan at 2 p.m.

DOJ decision puts warrants on hold

By Kristine L. Alave

THE ISSUANCE OF ARREST WARRANTS against the wife of suspected drug lord Amin Imam Boratong and his alleged henchmen for the killing of GMA 7 informant German Colisao has been deferred because of a recent decision of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez clearing them of the charges

Supt. Frank Uyami, Pasig police chief, said he had received reports that the Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 161 was supposed to issue arrest warrants for Memie, Boratong's wife; PO2 Ramil Along, Nashir Labay and other John Does, but the court postponed because of the decision.

Boratong, who is also a respondent, is detained at the National Bureau of Investigation.

Insufficient

In his May 23 ruling, Gonzalez said there was insufficient evidence to pin down the four for Colisao's murder. He also raised doubts about the credibility and testimony of government witness Samer Palao, and ordered the withdrawal of the information for the murder case filed against the respondents in court.

A court official who asked for anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to media confirmed that arrest warrants for the three have been prepared and were ready "for mailing."

But as the defense had asked the court to defer the proceedings, the court has decided to study the motion first before issuing the arrest warrants, the source said.

Palao, who was Boratong's alleged right-hand man when the shabu mart in Barangay Sto. Tomas, Pasig City was still operating, had testified that Boratong and Memie had ordered the killing of Colisao. The shabu compound was raided and demolished last year.

Disappointment

Uyami expressed disappointment over the developments, saying these were hindering the Philippine National Police's efforts to curb Boratong's alleged drug operations based in the eastern part of the metropolis.

"If there are no warrants of arrest for them, they will continue their operations," he said.

According to Palao, the Boratong couple ordered Colisao killed after the latter was discovered taking video footage of the shabu market in Pasig City on Nov. 14, 2005.

Police said Colisao was killed three days later. His body, which bore three gunshot wounds, was dumped on a Pasig street.

Cop accuses colleague of assault

By Allison W. Lopez

A MANILA POLICE INTELLIGENCE chief has accused a station commander of assaulting him after he allegedly drew his gun and hit him in the face at the Manila City Hall yesterday.

Insp. Enrico Miranda, intelligence head of Station 5, said Station 4 commander Supt. Jose Asayo and his son Joy attacked him inside the fiscal's office at around 10:20 a.m. yesterday.

Miranda then lodged a complaint at the General Assignments Section of the Manila Police District, and readied the filing of attempted murder and assault charges in the City Prosecutor's Office.

Miranda, who was attending to a hearing of a murder case lodged against him by Asayo's sister, Zenaida, said Asayo "had no business being there."

He said Asayo held him responsible for the killing of his brother, barangay chair Lamberto Sr., last year.

'Dagger looks'

"He said I had given him dagger looks. I was actually staring at his lawyer," Miranda said. "Then he dared me to a fight, drew a gun and punched me," he said, adding that he was "unaccompanied" at the time, unlike Asayo.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER, Superintendent Asayo countered that it was Miranda who had cursed him and punched his son. He added that no assault took place since his lawyer had prevented him from drawing his gun and hitting Miranda.

"Inspector Miranda is one of our suspects. We have a witness who saw the gunman riding his scooter. I was asking my lawyer not to let him derail the case," he said.

Asayo added he would not risk his position as station commander by engaging the lower-ranked Miranda in a fight.

"He is just provoking me so the case against him would not prosper," he said.

Asayo had also filed complaints of physical injury against Miranda and his policeman son Eric at the City Hall's Special Operations Group.

Complaints

Miranda, on the other hand, said Asayo already had numerous physical injury, grave threats and assault complaints filed against him since 1997, but was still "promoted."

"He should be out of the police service by now after the Supreme Court decided on his summary dismissal two months ago," he said.

Asayo said, however, said that the high court's decision was still on appeal.

Why the BIR has a collection shortage

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

WHY IS THE BUREAU OF INTERnal Revenue (BIR) having a shortfall in collections?

The simple answer is the money taxmen collect from delinquent business establishments does not go to the government, but to the pockets of some BIR officials and employees.

An example is the shakedown of a seafood restaurant in Mandaluyong City allegedly by BIR people.

The BIR closed down the restaurant recently for nonregistration of receipts, a violation of the Internal Revenue Code. But two days later, the restaurant reopened.

My little birdie at the BIR said the restaurant management settled with revenue officials to the tune of P8 million. My spy said P2 million allegedly went to a high-ranking BIR official. The rest was divided among his subordinates.

The BIR's reason for its shortfall in collections is that times are hard and businesses are not earning as much. That's baloney! Most of the fines from big and small businesses with delinquent tax payments go mostly to some BIR officials.

* * *

The abduction of Jonas Burgos, son of press freedom icon Joe Burgos, shows the military is divided between hard-core traditionalists and reform-minded progressives, according to Sen. Joker Arroyo. The senator, who ran on the administration ticket, implied that traditionalists could be behind Jonas' abduction.

A divided military is an undisciplined military. President Macapagal-Arroyo, Armed Forces commander in chief, is incapable of disciplining the military because she owes them her position.

* * *

The intramurals between the administration coalition of Lakas-CMD and Kampi may lead to the expected impeachment complaint against the President going up to the Senate. This is bad for Ms Arroyo since the Senate is dominated by the opposition. A reelected administration congressman said a divided House is just what Ms Arroyo's enemies are waiting for.

The impeachment complaints against Ms Arroyo were dead in the House of Representatives for two consecutive years. This time around, the impeachment may succeed in going up to the Senate.

* * *

Sources at the Department of Justice tell me even rank and file employees were shocked over the dismissal of the complaint against Amin Imam Boratong.

Boratong is the suspected operator and owner of the so-called shabu flea market in Pasig. He was cleared in the killing of a GMA 7 informant who took video footage of the compound in 2005, a year before it was raided by the police.

What disturbs my DOJ sources even more is that Boratong and his wife and other coaccused may also get off the hook on the charge that they ran the illegal drugs flea market.

According to my sources, a group of Maranaw prosecutors in the DOJ has influenced Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez into clearing Boratong in the execution of the GMA informant. Boratong is a Maranaw.

* * *

One of my DOJ sources asked me to publish their misgivings "because the Secretary (Gonzalez) is apparently under the spell of some people under him."

Some of the secretary's decisions in criminal cases were apparently influenced by his close aides. I hope Secretary Gonzalez reads this.

METROBRIEFS

Bataan governor's SUV missing

THE SPORTS utility vehicle of Bataan Governor-elect Enrique Garcia was stolen by car thieves yesterday morning while it was parked on a street in Makati City. Based on initial reports, Garcia's car, a white Mitsubishi Pajero with plate number WLT 312, was left in front of a house on Gilmore St., Barangay Palanan on Sunday night. But the car was discovered missing at 6 a.m. yesterday, Pablo Atienza, Garcia's driver, told case investigator SPO1 Herbert Tabernero. A desk officer at the Makati police' anticarnapping unit confirmed that the SUV belongs to Garcia but added that the official has yet to formally lodge a complaint with the police as of mid-afternoon yesterday. No suspects have been identified by the police. *DJ Yap*

Midwife, daughter wounded

A MIDWIFE and her daughter were shot and wounded by three armed men who pretended to be in need of a midwife last Sunday. Valenzuela police chief, Supt. Billy Beltran identified the victims as Marilyn Gonzales, 53, and her daughter, Kern, 21. The incident occurred inside the victims' house at the Sixto de Leon Compound on Bahay Pari Street, Gen. T. de Leon, Valenzuela City. Beltran said the three men went to the victims' house at around 10 p.m. Sunday. One of the suspects said he needed the services of a midwife because his wife was about to give birth. When the victims let them inside the house, the suspect announced a holdup and demanded that they give them their cash and valuables. Marilyn, however, resisted, prompting one of the suspects to shoot her in the chest. Her daughter was also shot after she tried to stop them. The victims are now confined at the Fatima Medical Hospital. Responding policemen failed to arrest the suspects who immediately left the area. *Nancy Carvajal*

Japan farm minister hangs self amid scandal

TOKYO—JAPAN'S FARM MINISTER killed himself Monday after a scandal over political donations that sent the government's approval ratings plummeting, officials said.

Toshikatsu Matsuoka, minister for agriculture, forestry and fisheries, was found unconscious in his residence for lawmakers and rushed to hospital, where he died, police and government officials said.

"He held in-depth knowledge of agricultural policies. The prime minister had high hopes for his work when he appointed him to the post," chief government spokesperson Yasuhisa Shiozaki told a brief news conference.

"We are very saddened that he had to pass away with his job unfinished," Shiozaki said.

He declined to give further details. The Mainichi Shimbun newspaper said in its online edition that Matsuoka hanged himself with a dog leash which he attached to the hinge of a door in his living room.

Matsuoka, 62, has been embroiled in a scandal involving political funding and bid-rigging.

Two committees set up to support his electoral campaigns allegedly received money from a group of businesses which then made bids for public works projects doled out by the government, according to media reports.

Prosecutors last week arrested two senior officials of the government body involved in the scandal, which involved contracts for building forest roads in Matsuoka's home district.

"I will watch it very carefully," Matsuoka had told reporters Friday of the arrests.

"I painfully feel the responsibility as a supervisory minister. I believe it is my responsibility not to let anything like this occur again," he had said.

Matsuoka has also come under fire for allegedly claiming a large bill for expenses on water and other utilities at his rent-free office building. While he is not legally required to publicly report such expenses, the opposition has demanded that he explain the spending, as the building is managed by the government.

Earlier Monday, newspaper opinion polls said the scandal was a factor that has caused approval for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government to tumble.

Support for the cabinet's performance fell to 32 percent, down 11 points from April and the lowest level since Abe came to power in September, according to the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper.

Abe had previously been seen as easily coasting to a victory in national elections due in July.

Abe, at 52 Japan's youngest post-World War II prime minister, has tried hard to shake off perceptions that he cannot control the old guard of his party, which has ruled Japan almost continuously since 1955.

Two of Abe's top aides resigned late last year in separate scandals, while other ministers have made embarrassing gaffes.

Matsuoka, known as a staunch advocate for the farm and construction lobbies, has been closely involved in such hot-button issues as deadlocked World Trade Organization negotiations and US calls for Japan to open further its market to US beef.

Matsuoka, a native of the southern city of Kumamoto, spent almost all of his career as a bureaucrat in the agriculture ministry before being elected to parliament in 1990 as a candidate of Abe's Liberal Democratic Party.

He was appointed to the minister's post in September when Abe took over from reform-minded premier Junichiro Koizumi. *AFP*

MATSUOKA

64 years on, slug extracted from Chinese woman's head

BEIJING—A CHINESE WOMAN'S 64-year-old headache has ended after doctors removed a bullet that relatives said lodged in her skull when Japanese soldiers shot her during World War II, state media reported on Monday.

Jin Guangying, now 77, lost consciousness after a Japanese patrol in Jiangsu province fired at her in 1943 as she went to meet her grandfather, a guerrilla fighter, the Beijing News said.

"When she came to, her head was wrapped in a bandage and she never realized there was a bullet lodged deep in her head," the paper said.

Later, she would regularly have headaches, foam at the mouth and "talk nonsense… like she had gone mad," the paper said.

Jin's family had thought her symptoms were due to a tumor, the paper said, quoting Wang Zhengping, the woman's daughter.

"Because our family was poor, we were never able to have her taken for a thorough checkup," Wang said.

A military expert in Nanjing, the Jiangsu capital, had identified the bullet as one used by Japanese soldiers at that time, the newspaper said.

Jin's relatives planned to seek redress for her more than 60 years of suffering.

"As her children, we will soon go to Nanjing to consult with relevant experts as to how to seek compensation from the Japanese government, and will definitely be seeking a public apology," the paper quoted Wang as saying. *Reuters*

SCHOOL FOR STRIPPERS

Women dance at a dance studio in Taipei on May 13 as part of the "How to Look and Feel Sexy Workshop." Nina Chen, creator of Taiwan's first strip dance workshop, teaches women how to sway to the music while slowly taking off their clothes in front of a wall of mirrors, aiming to help women appreciate their bodies, discover their "sexy charms" and boost their self-confidence.

Gays defy ban, stage Moscow rally

MOSCOW—PUNCHES AND kicks flew, eggs and insults were hurled, and several global gay rights supporters were arrested Sunday as activists defied a state ban and briefly staged Moscow's second ever Gay Pride march.

Police detained Russian gay community leader Nikolai Alexeyev and several European lawmakers in central Moscow at the start of the demonstration by dozens of homosexual rights activists campaigning for an end to sexual discrimination.

Dozens of Russian right-wing extremists converged on the group, shouting insults like "fags," and "perverts," throwing eggs and punching and kicking gay demonstrators in front of riot police who intervened much later.

The police also systematically arrested both the attackers and the assaulted.

The gay rights activists were also assaulted by ultranationalists and Orthodox Church hardliners.

Russian news agencies, citing police, said eight to 10 people had been arrested for participating in the rally.

The demonstrators were trying to march on Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov's office to hand over a memorandum signed by more than 40 members of the European Parliament—requesting permission to hold a march in central Moscow.

Luzhkov had earlier described Gay Pride marches as a "work of Satan." Also detained were Volker Beck, a member of Germany's parliament; Marco Cappato, an Italian member of the European Parliament, and veteran British gay rights campaigner Peter Tatchell.

Tatchell and Beck were punched in the face in full view of police and dozens of journalists. Another activist was seen bleeding from his face after being attacked.

Tatchell took a punch in the eye from an ultra right-wing nationalist counterdemonstrator, witnesses said. Riot police eventually detained several far-right members. *AFP*

Lebanon set for long haul over camp standoff

NAHR AL-BARED, LEBANON—Lebanon is set for the long haul in a bid to peacefully end a standoff with Islamist militants holed up at a battered refugee camp, a government source said Sunday, as the two sides again traded gunfire after dark.

"The government has given Palestinian organizations the chance to resolve the problems with Fatah al-Islam without any time restraints," the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

As darkness fell, Fatah al-Islam militants holed up in the Nahr al-Bared camp, near the northern city of Tripoli, fired off bursts of automatic gunfire which was met with antitank fire from Lebanese troops, an AFP correspondent said.

Sporadic gun battles between fighters from the shadowy extremist group Fatah al-Islam and troops encircling the camp have broken out every night since the Islamists declared a unilateral truce on Tuesday following three days of heavy fighting that left 78 people dead.

Hundreds of heavily armed soldiers, backed by tanks, armored personnel carriers and machinegun-mounted jeeps, surround the camp in which thousands of civilians are trapped without running water, with little food and no electricity.

The army continued to reinforce positions on Sunday, setting up more checkpoints and bringing in equipment—including tables, chairs and beds—in containers, suggesting the siege may last.

According to UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) estimates, between 3,000 and 8,000 of the 31,000 Palestinian refugees officially registered at Nahr al-Bared are still inside the camp.

Witnesses said around 30 people braved sniper fire to get out on Sunday.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said it had managed to get four vans carrying bread, water and medical supplies through the southern entrance of the camp under the protection of soldiers. Sick and wounded had been ferried out in five ambulances.

According to another government source, Lebanon is seeking the handover of fighters from the Sunni Muslim Fatah al-Islam to stand trial over attacks against its armed forces.

Groups involved in negotiations are the main Palestinian factions in Lebanon including the Fatah party of Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas, the Islamist group Hamas and the leftist Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. *AFP*

LA/MAT 16217/2006 (S15)
FCMC 12337/2006

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE
HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
MATRIMONIAL CAUSES NO. 12337 OF 2006

BETWEEN
MERELY D. RESURECCION — Petitioner
And
DOMINGO D. LOBATON — Respondent

A DIVORCE PETITION HAS BEEN FILED AGAINST THE UNDER-MENTIONED DOMINGO D. LOBATON, Late of Panoc, Soon, Dumangas, Iloilo, Philippines may apply at the Family Court Registry at M2 Wanchai Law Court, No.12 Harbour Road, Hong Kong SAR for a copy of the Petition. If within one month he has not communicated with the Registry, the Court may hear the case in his absence.

Registrar

To be advertised as follows :-
Once in Philippine Daily Inquirer

(PDI - May 29, 2007)

In US, lost chances for survival start even before a stroke strikes

AN ESTIMATED 700,000 AMERICANS HAD A stroke last year, but very few end up at a hospital with the equipment and expertise to accurately diagnose and treat it.

Stroke is the third-leading cause of death in this country, behind heart disease and cancer, killing 150,000 Americans a year, leaving many more permanently disabled, and costing the nation $62.7 billion in direct and indirect costs, according to the American Stroke Association.

But from diagnosis to treatment to rehabilitation to preventing it altogether, a stroke is a litany of missed opportunities.

Many patients with stroke symptoms are examined by emergency room doctors who are uncomfortable deciding whether the patient is really having a stroke—a blockage or rupture of a blood vessel in the brain that injures or kills brain cells—or is suffering from another condition. Doctors are therefore reluctant to give the only drug shown to make a real difference, tPA, or tissue plasminogen activator. Many hospitals say they cannot afford to have neurologists on call to diagnose strokes, and cannot afford to have MRI scanners, the most accurate way to diagnose strokes, for the emergency room.

Although tPA was shown in 1996 to save lives and prevent brain damage, and although the drug could help half of all stroke patients, only three to four percent receive it. Most patients, denying or failing to appreciate their symptoms, wait too long to seek help—tPA must be given within three hours. And even when patients call 911 promptly, most hospitals, often uncertain about stroke diagnoses, do not provide the drug.

"I label this a national tragedy or a national embarrassment," said Dr. Mark J. Alberts, a neurology professor at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University. "I know of no disease that is as common or as serious as stroke and where you basically have one therapy and it's only used in three to four percent of patients. That's like saying you only treat three to four percent of patients with bacterial pneumonia with antibiotics."

Most strokes would never happen if people took simple measures like controlling their blood pressure. Few do. Many say they forget to take medication; others decide not to. Some have no idea they need the drugs.

Still, there is much more hope now, said Dr. Ralph L. Sacco, professor and chair of neurology at the Miller School of Medicine at the University of Miami. Now, Sacco said, there is a device, an MRI scanner, that greatly improves diagnosis, there is a treatment that works and there are others being tested. "Medical systems have to catch up to the research," he said.

High dam planned for 'mud volcano'

JAKARTA—A MASSIVE CONCRETE DAM 15 stories high would be built around Indonesia's disastrous "mud volcano" under the latest proposal to stop toxic sludge spewing from its core, a report said Monday.

Indonesian and Japanese engineers have pitched the ambitious plan to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono as the nation marks one year on Tuesday since the mudspill started, forcing thousands to flee their homes.

The plan, estimated to cost $70 million, is the latest attempt to try to stem the steaming mud that started pouring from the earth after an exploratory gas drilling team pierced a layer of strata.

The flow has engulfed homes, factories and farms over more than 600 hectares near Indonesia's second city of Surabaya on main Java island.

Under the plan, the mud building up in the dam would eventually be so heavy that it could act as a counterweight to the sludge trying to emerge from the crater, blocking off the flow, said Tempo magazine, which has a copy of the proposal.

The wall encircling the volcano would be 10 meters thick and 120 meters in diameter, the magazine said. The wall itself would consist of two separate fences of thick steel pipes encased in concrete up to 48 meters high. *AFP*

Republic of the Philippines
MUNICIPALITY OF VICTORIA
Province of Northern Samar
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date: May 30, 2007
ADB Loan No.: 1772-PHI
Contract No: SP-08-009-01

1 The Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the cost of the INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RURAL PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT SECTOR (InfRES) PROJECT and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the Contract for **Rehabilitation/ Improvement of 12.34 kilometers Victoria Farm to Market Road, Package 1.** Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries of the Asian Development Bank that:

(a) are registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board to undertake infrastructure projects as Medium A contractor or better, and

(b) have undertaken within the past 5 years, as the contractor, management contractor or subcontractor, (3) roads construction work projects valued at least Nineteen Million Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P19,500,000.00) each.

2. The *LGU-Victoria* invites sealed bids from bidders with the above qualifications for the construction and completion of the Works for the Rehabilitation/ Improvement of 12 34 kilometers Victoria Farm to Market Road Package 1, which includes Earthworks (Excavation and embankment), Road Gravelling, and Construction/ Installation of RCBC and RCPC. The Contract Period is about Twelve months (360 calendar days).

3. Bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect and acquire the bidding documents, at BAC Secretariat LGU-Victoria, Victoria, Northern Samar.

4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders on submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **EIGHT THOUSAND PESOS (P8,000.00).**

5 All Bids must be accompanied by a Security of 2% of the total bid price in the form of Cash, Manager s Check or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency, and must be delivered to LGU-VICTORIA, VICTORIA , N SAMAR. The schedule of bid activities are as follows:

Activity	Date	Time	Venue
Issuance of Bid Documents	May 30 to July 5, 2007	8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M	BAC Secretariat, LGU-Victoria, N. Samar
Bid Preparation Period	June 6 to July 5, 2007		
Pre-Bid Conference	June 22, 2007	9:00 A.M.	Municipal Session Hall, Victoria, N. Samar
Deadline for Submission of Bids	July 6, 2007	9:59 A.M.	Municipal Session Hall, Victoria, N Samar
Bid Opening	July 6, 2007	10:00 A.M.	Municipal Session Hall, Victoria, N. Samar

6. The LGU reserves the right to accept or reject any bids and to cancel the bidding process at any time prior to award of the contractor, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligations to inform the affected bidders of the reasons for Employer's action.

7. For further inquiries you can call cell no. 09005840767

(Sgd) **MARTHA E. CADANO**
Chairperson,
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - May 29, 2007)

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Arch foes Iran, US meet on Iraq chaos

BAGHDAD—ARCH FOES IRAN AND THE UNITED STATES BEGAN their highest-level official face-to-face talks in 27 years in Baghdad on Monday against a backdrop of mutual recriminations over the chaos in Iraq.

"Baghdad is hosting a meeting between America and Iran and I hope that this meeting will be the beginning of a good chapter and an important step for the region," Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki said before the closed-door talks.

"I hope that this meeting will result in a common understanding and will be followed by further meetings to resolve the outstanding issues."

US ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker was meeting Iranian ambassador Hassan Kazemi for the first such encounter since the countries broke off diplomatic relations in 1980, following the storming of the US embassy in Tehran.

But there was little expectation that the envoys would see eye-to-eye over the Iraq crisis, with Iran's foreign ministry on the eve of the talks accusing US agents of sponsoring subversives in its border provinces.

Washington has dismissed similar accusations in the past, but they served to underline the chill that still grips Iranian-American relations a quarter of a century after radical students stormed the US embassy in Tehran.

The poisonous rhetoric that has dominated exchanges between the enemies has been further envenomed by the conflict in Iraq, in which US commanders accuse Iranian agents of arming and training insurgents and illegal militias.

They accuse Iran's Revolutionary Guards of supplying favored armed groups with armor-piercing roadside bombs that have been blamed for the deaths of hundreds among the 3,455 American troops killed in the conflict.

US forces are holding seven alleged Revolutionary Guards agents who were detained in Iraq on suspicion of subversion, while Tehran furiously insists that they are diplomats.

Tehran says the US-led occupation force is the cause of the problems and that it is also allowing anti-Iranian rebels to use Iraq as a rear base.

Both countries are also at loggerheads over Iran's nuclear program which has been ruled off the agenda in Monday's talks so as to limit discussions to quelling the chaos in Iraq.

Maliki emphasized that Iraq did not want to be an arena for foreign powers to work out their differences through violence.

"Iraq will not be a springboard for threats against any of the neighboring countries," he vowed. "In return we look for a similar stance from the other states, especially our neighbors.

On Sunday, Iranian news agencies said the Swiss ambassador, who looks after US interests in Tehran, had been summoned to the ministry to receive a "strong protest over the hostile intervention of the US government."

Ambassador Philippe Welti was told that "Iran has recently discovered a number of spy networks which aim to infiltrate and carry out sabotage actions in western, southwestern and central Iran," state media said.

"These spies were guided by American intelligence services," they added.

Monday's meeting follows a brief encounter between US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and her Iranian counterpart Manouchehr Mottaki on May 4 at a conference on Iraq held at the Egyptian resort of Sharm El-Sheikh.

Ahmad Tavakoli, an influential Iranian MP, told the Etemad Melli newspaper that Iranians could overcome their traditional hatred of the United States if it is in their interest. *AFP*

DEADRA Garrigus kisses the grave of her son US Army Sgt. Mickel Garrigus in "Section 60" of the Arlington National Cemetery on May 27. Section 60, the newest portion of the vast national cemetery on the outskirts of Washington D.C, contains the remains of US soldiers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

GIs in Iraq ask: What are we doing here?

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—STAFF SGT. David Safstrom does not regret his previous tours in Iraq, not even a difficult second stint when two comrades were killed while trying to capture insurgents.

"In Mosul, in 2003, it felt like we were making the city a better place," he said. "There was no sectarian violence, Saddam was gone, we were tracking down the bad guys. It felt awesome."

But now on his third deployment in Iraq, he is no longer a believer in the mission. The pivotal moment came, he says, this February when soldiers killed a man setting a roadside bomb. When they searched the bomber's body, they found identification showing him to be a sergeant in the Iraqi army.

"I thought: 'What are we doing here? Why are we still here?'" said Safstrom, a member of Delta Company of the 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry, 82nd Airborne Division. "We're helping guys that are trying to kill us. We help them in the day. They turn around at night and try to kill us."

His views are echoed by most of his fellow soldiers in Delta Company, renowned for its aggressiveness.

A small minority of Delta Company soldiers—the younger, more recent enlistees in particular—seem to still wholeheartedly support the war. Others are ambivalent, torn between fear of losing more friends in battle, longing for their families and a desire to complete their mission.

With few reliable surveys of soldiers' attitudes, it is impossible to simply extrapolate from the small number of soldiers in the company. But in interviews with more than a dozen soldiers in this 83-man unit over a one-week period, most said they were disillusioned by repeated deployments, by what they saw as the abysmal performance of Iraqi security forces and by a conflict that they considered a civil war, one they had no ability to stop.

"In 2003, 2004, 100 percent of the soldiers wanted to be here, to fight this war," said Sgt. 1st Class David Moore, a self-described "conservative Texas Republican" and platoon sergeant who strongly advocates an American withdrawal. "Now, 95 percent of my platoon agrees with me."

In Safstrom's view, the American presence is futile. "If we stayed here for five, even 10 more years, the day we leave here these guys will go crazy," he said. "It would go straight into a civil war. That's how it feels, like we're putting a Band-Aid on this country until we leave here."

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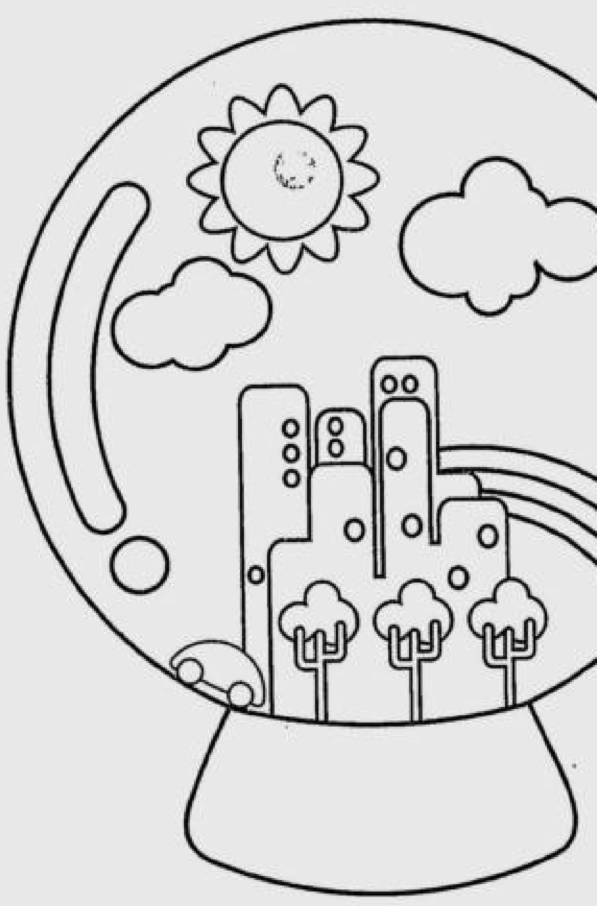

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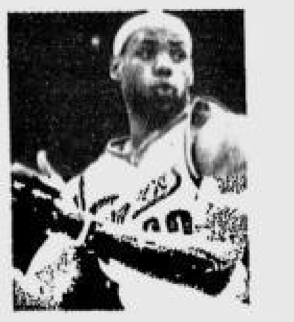
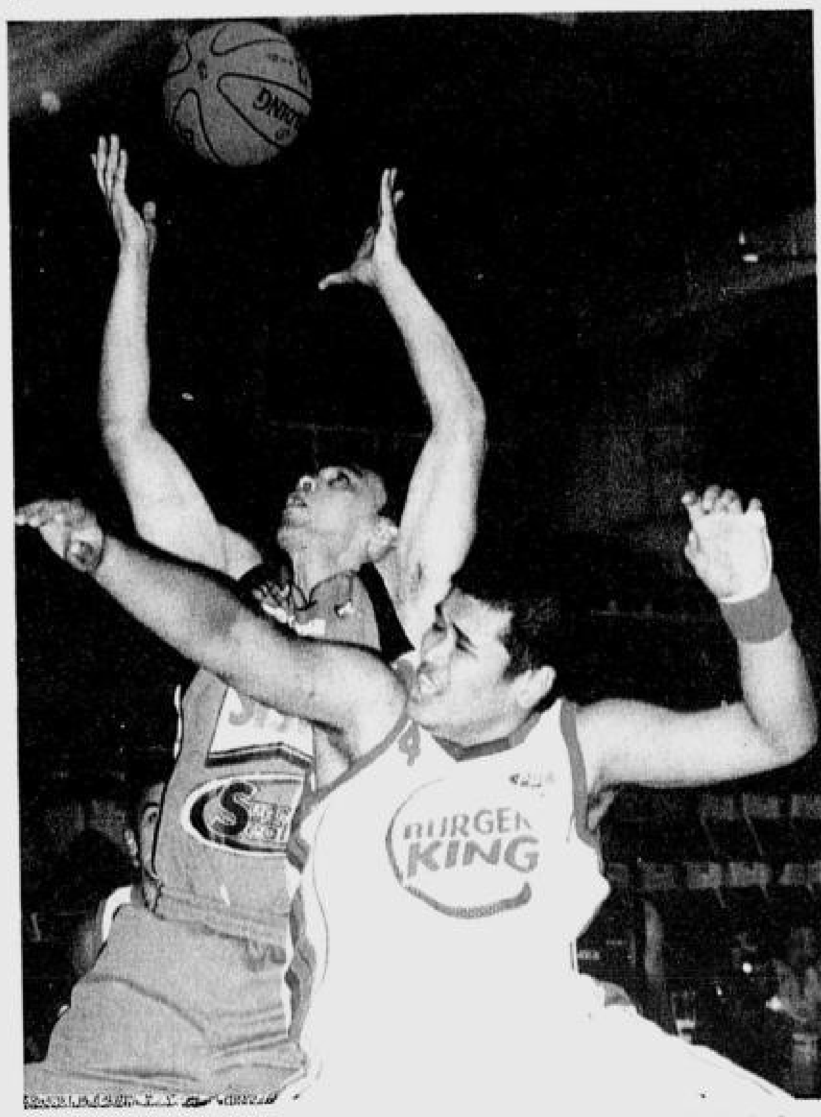


Sealers, Road Kings seek semifinal slots



NURJANJAM Alfad of Henkel Sista controls the rebound against JR Quiñahan of Burger King in a recent game. The two teams will battle separate foes today.

INQUIRER PHOTO/ERIK ARAZAS

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE FIL-AM FACTOR WILL come into play when Henkel Sista and Toyota Balintawak shoot for semifinal slots in the PBL Unity Cup today.

Revived by Fil-Am point guard Ryan Reyes, the Super Sealers will tackle San Miguel-Magnolia at 4 p.m. at the Olivarez College Sports Center.

The Road Kings, bannered by 6-foot-7 Fil-Am Joe Devance, will clash against Burger King earlier at 2 p.m.

Both enjoying twice-to-beat quarterfinal incentives, Henkel Sista and Toyota Balintawak hope to advance to the Final Four in the company of early semifinalists Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala and Harbour Centre.

"Ryan is very important to our team," said Henkel Sista coach Caloy Garcia of Reyes. "He's a perfect guy for us because he can shoot, defend and provide the leadership on the court."

GAMES TOMORROW
(Olivarez College Sports Center)
2 p.m.—Toyota Balintawak vs Burger King
4 p.m.—Henkel Sista vs San Mig-Magnolia

From a bleak 0-4 start, the Super Sealers saw their fortunes turn with Reyes' arrival from California.

The 6-foot-1 Reyes averaged 14.7 points, 4.7 rebounds, three assists and three steals to help the Super Sealers win six of their next eight games and clinch the quarterfinal bonus.

San Miguel-Magnolia coach Koy Banal said his wards—led by Jonas Villanueva, Jeff Chan and Bonbon Custodio—must focus on mental preparation to overcome the confident Sista crew.

"They beat us twice so we have to dig deep to be sure we're ready against them," said Banal. "It's important for us to have a correct mind-set. We're not that consistent, so the goal is consistency."

The Super Sealers trounced the Beverage Masters, 71-62, in the first round and scored an elimination sweep with a 67-61 decision in their next encounter.

"There's no guarantee we can beat Magnolia again," noted Garcia. "Magnolia is a tough team."

Devance, meanwhile, has yet to win with the Road Kings despite norming 14.6 points and eight boards in three games.

Although coach Ariel Vanguardia believes the 2006 Unity Cup Most Valuable Player will blend just in time with the Road Kings, the Whoppers think that momentum is on their side.

"We made them think we can beat them," said coach Lawrence Chongson after the Whoppers halted their seven-game slide with a 78-75 triumph against the Road Kings.

"The seven losses are behind us now," noted Chongson. "In every loss, we just bring in the lesson. I didn't stop pushing buttons."

Jim Viray, JR Quiñahan and Mike Bravo helped the Whoppers avenge their first-round 82-66 loss against the Road Kings during the final elimination playdate last Saturday.

Jasmine W. Payo

Orcollo, Pagulayan end up joint 3rd

DENNIS ORCOLLO AND ALEX PAGULAYAN yielded their semifinal matches yesterday, ending the Filipinos' title bid in the 2007 Predator World 10-Ball at the Bankshot Billiard Hall in Jacksonville, Florida.

The 28-year-old Orcollo bowed to eventual champion Shane Van Boening of the United States, 11-9, while Pagulayan yielded to runner-up Cliff Joyner, 11-10, also from the United States.

Van Boening, a 22-year-old sensation who finished runner-up to Orcollo in the 2007 Enjoypool.com last week in Las Vegas, downed compatriot Joyner in the finals, 13-11, to earn $14,000.

Joyner settled for $6000 while Orcollo and Pagulayan received $4,000 each.

ORCOLLO

PAGULAYAN

The losing quarterfinalists, Filipinos Warren Kiamco and Francisco "Django" Bustamante, American Stevie Moore and Portugese Manuel Gama, got $2,500 each.

Orcollo subdued Japanese Naoyuki Oi, 11-8, and Moore, 11-5, before reaching the final four. Pagulayan, on the other hand, needed to beat five-time world champ Johnny Archer of the United States, 11-7, and Bustamante, 11-10.

Kiamco, who beat ex-world 9-ball king Ralf Souquet of Germany, 11-9, in the last 16, dropped his quarterfinals match to Boening, 11-4. Bustamante trounced former International Challenge of Champion ruler Thomas Engert of Germany, 11-4, before losing to Pagulayan.

Other Filipinos who saw action were Marlon Manalo, Lee Vann Corteza, Al Lapeña, Edwin Montal and Santos Sambajon.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

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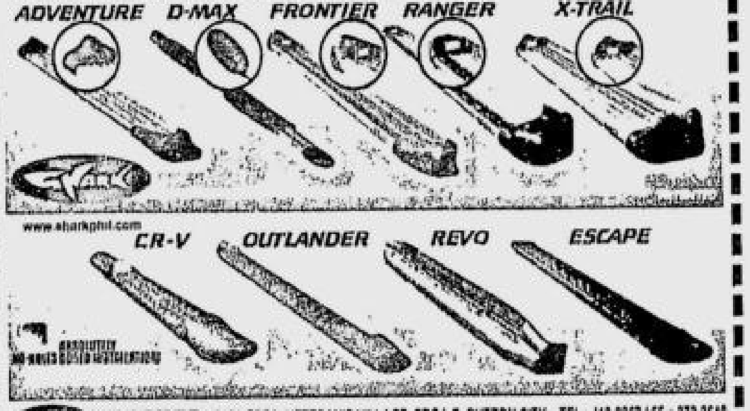

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Adamson spikers stun tough Tigresses

ADAMSON, UNIVERSITY of the Philippines and Philippine Christian prevailed over separate opponents at the start of the 2007 Inter-Collegiate volleyball championship Sunday night at the RTU gym in Mandaluyong City.

The Lady Falcons banked on the crisp spiking of Hannah Suarez and Rissa Jane Laguilles to upset the UAAP women's defending champion Santo Tomas Tigresses, 25-17, 18-25, 25-23, 19-25, 15-13, in the first game.

The State U Lady Fighting Maroons downed the University of Perpetual Help Lady Altas, 29-27, 19-25, 25-23, 16-25, 17-15, in the second game of the annual event organized by PVF president Pedro Mendoza and secretary-general Oti Camangian.

The PCU Lady Dolphins joined the two early winners by beating University of Cordillera, 25-14, 25-17, 25-23, in the third game of the event that drew 13 women's and 16 men's teams.

In the exhibition game, RP-Youth upset World City College, 28-26, 25-21, 25-16.

In the lone men's game, UAAP champ Far Eastern walloped Saint Francis, 25-13, 18-25, 25-23, 25-23.

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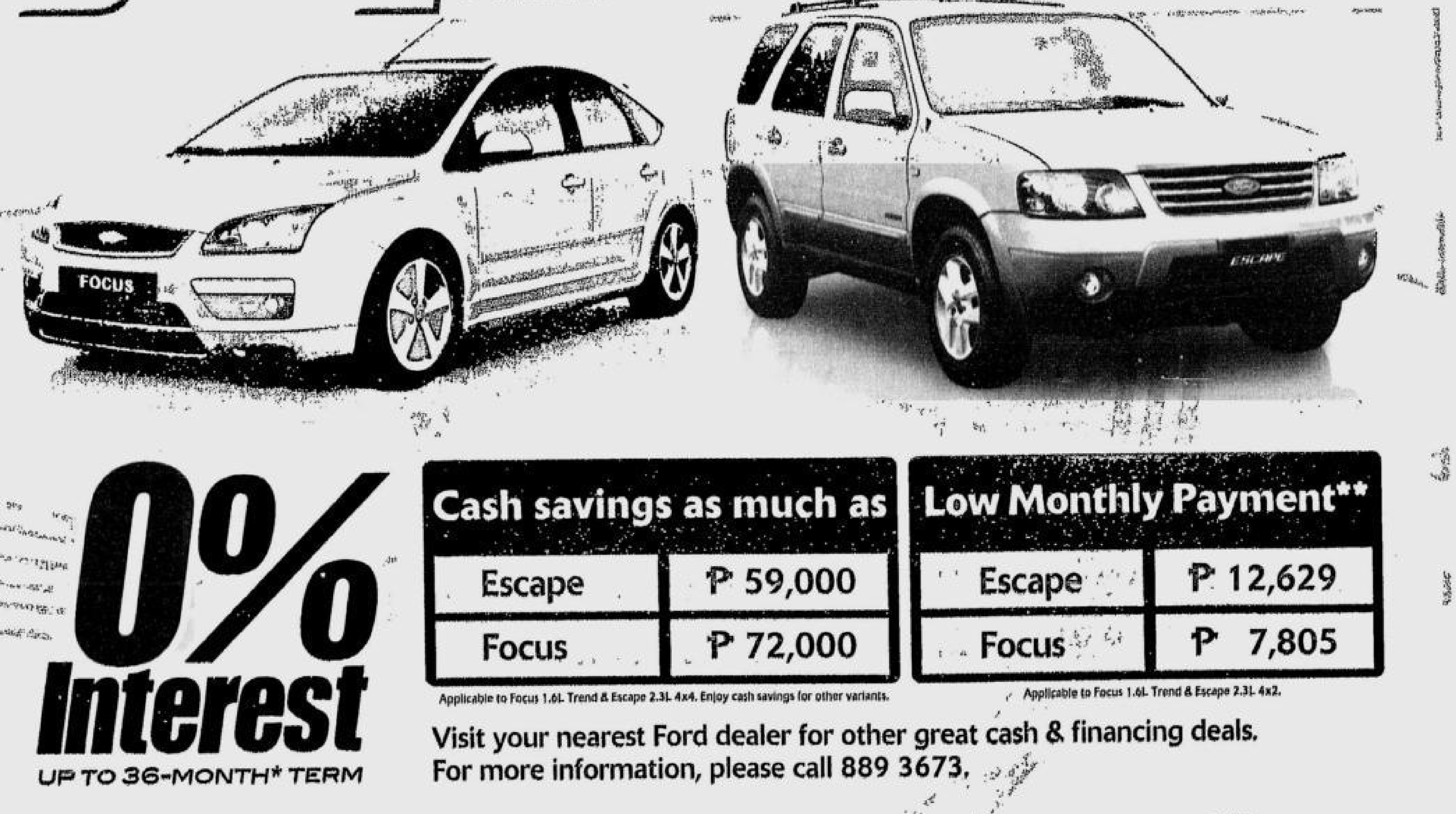

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Ildefonso, Cardona get it done for San Mig, TNT

By June Navarro

ALASKA COACH TIM CONE HAD WISHED more than a week ago that his Aces could stay away from the in-form San Miguel Beermen and the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals.

"You don't want to run into these teams," said Cone. "They are playing good basketball and capable of beating just about anybody right now."

On Sunday night, the Beermen and the Phone Pals validated Cone's apprehension as they emerged the hottest teams in the classification round of the Talk 'N Text-PBA Fiesta Conference.

The Beermen, starring Danny Ildefonso, stretched their winning streak to eight by topping the reeling Barangay Ginebra Kings while the Phone Pals, with Mac Cardona providing the key hits in the clutch, roared to their fourth consecutive victory at the expense of the Sta. Lucia Realtors.

The Phone Pals moved into a three-way tie for second place at 11-6 with the Aces and the Gin Kings, a full game behind pace-setting Red Bull (12-5) while the Beermen are now deadlocked with the Air21 Express at 9-7.

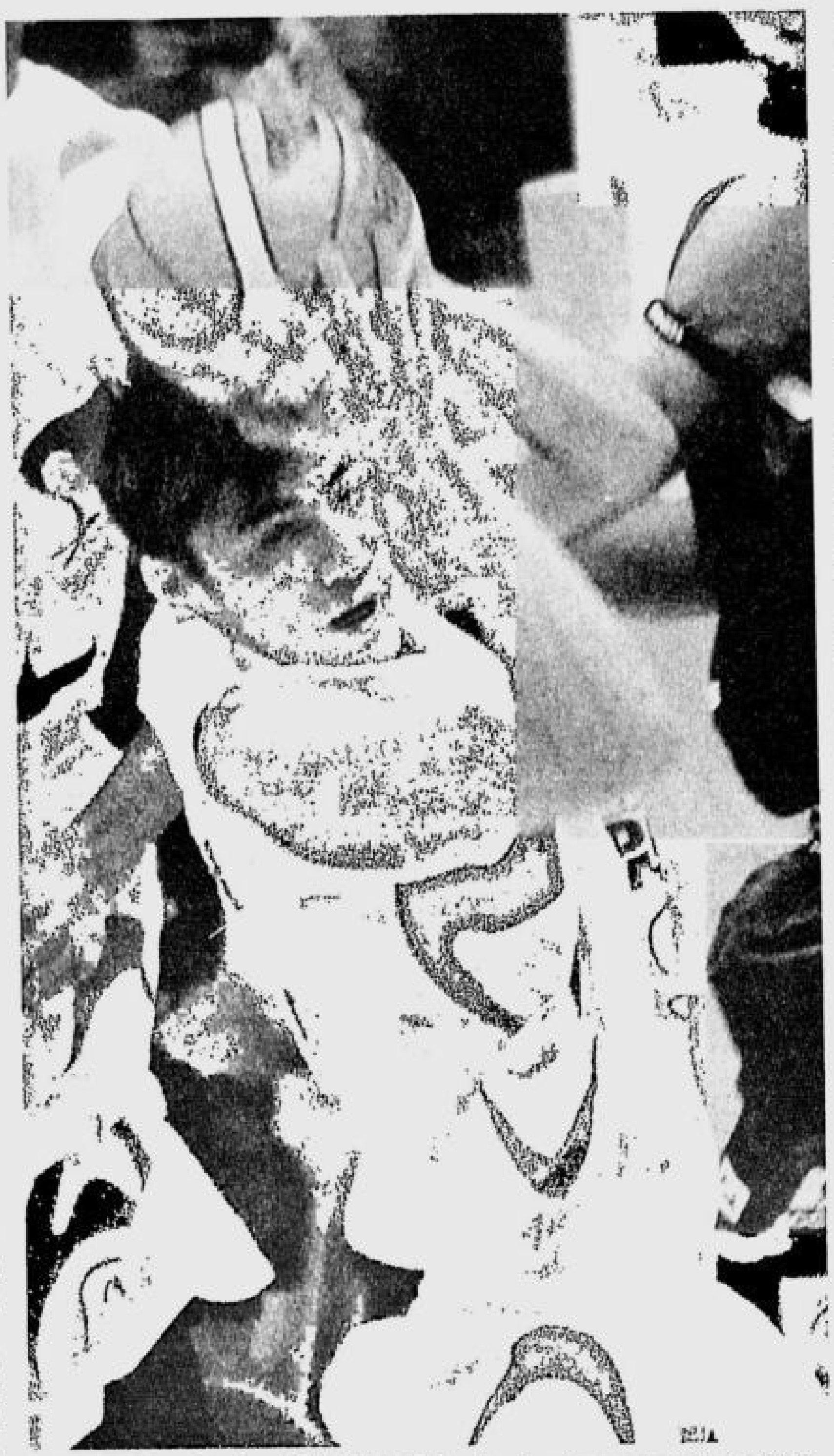
It came as no surprise then that Ildefonso and Cardona, who also lit up the statistical board when their teams recently posted twin victories, shared the Accel-PBA Press Corps Player of the Week award.

Ildefonso normed 18.5 points, 5.5 rebounds and 4.5 assists during the Beermen's romp over the Welcoat Dragons and the Gin Kings.

Cardona, the Phone Pals' leading local scorer, tallied an average of 20.5 points against Sta. Lucia and Purefoods while pulling down 7.5 rebounds and issuing 3.5 assists.

With only three points in the first half, Cardona waxed hot and fired 15 points, including three triples, in the second half that keyed the 114-102 Talk 'N Text victory over Sta. Lucia Sunday night.

Ildefonso was also at his sparkling best two nights ago. The two-time MVP stood his ground against Ginebra import Rod Nealy and delivered 17 points, six rebounds, five assists, two steals and a block in San Miguel Beer's 101-98 win.



SPITFIRE Mac Cardona, Talk 'N Text's leading local gunner, averaged 20.5 points in the Phone Pals' two recent wins. INQUIRER PHOTO / AUGUST DELA CRUZ

UST juniors scuttle FEU, nail last spot in Nike loop

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS OVERPOWERED Adamson University, 77-69, to clinch the last quarterfinal slot in Group B in the junior division of the 2007 Nike Summer League basketball tournament at the FEU gym on R. Papa Street, Manila.

Joseph Robert Luna scored 21 points for the Baby Tigers, who needed to hurdle two playoff matches to enter the quarterfinal round.

Denied by the Baby Falcons, 70-85, last Saturday, the Baby Tigers defeated Philippine College of Criminolgy, 79-69, late yesterday, then exacted revenge over the Baby Falcons to enter the quarterfinal round.

Rommel Aquino and Kyle Neypes added 10 points apiece for UST, which will face Far Eastern University in the quarterfinal round.

In women's play, Cusa champion PCCr nipped Adamson, 86-74, to take the No. 2 spot in Group A, while University of the East subdued National University, 87-50 to corner the No. 4 spot.

Stineli Casakit topscored with 29 points for the Lady Enforcers of coach Bang Tumapat.

Joan Mesina added 19, Mary Grace Quemada had 17 and Katrina Garcia contributed 11 points for PCCr, which will meet Cusa rival Philippine Maritime Institute in the quarterfinals.

Adamson will face Group B No. 2 FEU.

The Amazons relied on Rossan Marzan to nail the last spot in Group A and set up a battle with Group B topnothcer University of the Philippines.

Tagum new center for beach volleyball

THE COUNTRY'S BEACH VOLLEYBALL BETS now have a place they can call their own.

A 5,000-seat venue has been constructed in Tagum City, Davao del Norte, that will become the official training and competition center for the national beach volleyball team aspirants.

Philippine Volleyball Federation secretary general Otie Camangian said the venue could help generate more interest in the sport.

Meanwhile, beach volleybelles Heidi Ilustre and Diane Pascua picked up three straight wins before winding up in 25th place in their first World Tour campaign in Sentosa, Singapore, recently.

The 2005 SEAG bronze medalists and 2006 Asian Games quarterfinalists managed to make it to the main draw of the tough competition, but lost twice to Australian foes.

Ilustre and Pascua hope to pile up enough world ranking points so they could gain an outright Olympic slot. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Beijing training camps for RP bets not ready

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE COUNTRY'S OLYMPIC TRAINING program has suffered yet another delay.

This time, it's the Beijing training camps which failed to confirm that it is ready to accommodate the Filipino athletes, according to Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Ramirez yesterday.

Ramirez said the chief of protocol of China's Ministry of Sports, Zhang Quanli, failed to make the necessary confirmation for the arrival of 28 athletes who were scheduled to leave for the mainland today.

"We have been waiting for their confirmation," Ramirez told the INQUIRER.

He said the national athletes will be flying to China on June 8 instead.

Ramirez also denied reports that there are no available accommodations for the national athletes in China and that there is an epidemic in Guangzhou.

The athletes from shooting, diving, fencing, weightlifting, fencing and wushu were originally set to fly to their respective Chinese training camps as early as March.

"We will be sending them to the training camps using PSC money," said Ramirez.

The President's husband, Mike Arroyo, has pledged to support the Olympic training program by helping raise P250 million through his foundation.

Last week, Mr. Arroyo's foundation recommended that only boxing, taekwondo, shooting and fencing be included in the training program, which originally had 14 sports disciplines.

But Ramirez said their commitment with the other sports will remain, especially in sports where RP athletes have qualified for the Olympics.

JOEY Almeda (right) takes over from lead driver Joey Perry as crew members attend to their Mazda Miata in the GT 200 race.

Perry finally strikes paydirt with GT win

ROSARIO, BATANGAS—UNHERALDED veteran Joey Perry grabbed a piece of local motorsports history as maiden winner of the 2007 Petron-San Mig Coffee Philippine Grand Touring (GT) Championship Series recently at the Batangas Racing Circuit here.

Perry, driving a Mazda Miata, turned back favored drivers in race-engineered cars like Honda Civics and Porche cars as he topped both the morning sprint race and the main enduro race in the GT 200.

The main 30-lap endurance race proved to be an exciting innovation in local racing. The drivers' talents, strategy, and the efficiency of their cars and crews came into play in the event sanctioned by the Automobile Association of the Philippines.

Perry and co-driver Joey Almeda, a former slalom and motocross champion, made it all look easy. Perry took the driver's seat in the first 15 laps and did a good job dicing for the lead against racing champ Carlos Anton.

The more experienced Almeda took over in the 16th lap. By the 21st lap, Almeda had wrested the lead from Anton's co-driver Joselu Romero Salas.

The Perry-Almeda tandem, clocking the day's fastest laptime of 1:57.846, wrapped up the 30-lap race in one hour, two minutes and 35.732 seconds, or 55.609 seconds ahead of the Anton-Salas Team.

Veteran Rene Mapua and his partner Juny Binamira, also driving a Mazda Miata, wound up third with a time of 1:04.12.673.

"Our only strategy was to go as fast as we could and win the race," said Perry. "The car set-up was good and I got a perfect co-driver who I've been racing with for a long time. I should also give Joey (Almeda) due credit for doing a perfect job completing the conquest."

Perry earlier ruled the 12-lap sprint race over Juny Binamira and third placer Bubi Camus in the GT 200 division, clocking 24:43.414.

Sharing the limelight was the tandem of JP Cariño and Tom Stockinger who bagged the GT 125 crown over Bingo Valero and Eric Tanael, and the team of David Tanael and Sandy de Guzman in the GT 300 division.

Eric Tanael also prevailed in the GT 125 sprint race over JP Carino while elder brother David Tanael ruled the GT 300 class.

'Dagdag-bawas' in SEAG events

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THERE ARE TWO MAJOR REASONS WHY defending overall champion Philippines will lose to host Thailand in this year's edition of the Southeast Asian Games this December.

First, almost half of the country's 282 gold and silver medal winners of the Games held here two years ago have either retired or been inactive.

According to former swimming champion Mark Joseph, co-chair of the SEAG Task Force, officials of several National Sports Association have informed them of the thinning ranks of their gold, silver and bronze medal winners from the 23rd Southeast Asian Games, which the country dominated for the first time since joining the competition in 1977.

A big blow for us, added Joseph, who is also the deputy secretary general of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Second, almost 30 more SEAG gold medallists will miss the trip to Thailand after 24 events were scrapped from the roster of events.

This did not sit well with POC first vice president and newly appointed SEA Games chief of mission Rep. Monico Puentevella, who said the POC will do everything "to push for the re-inclusion of these events during the SEAG Federation Council meeting on June 2-5 in Thailand."

* * *

Puentevella said he is confident that the Philippines can convince the other members of the SEAG Federation Council to support the POC proposal to return the events that were stricken off.

Scrapped were nine events in wushu, four in billiards, four in traditional boat racing, three in arnis, three in diving, one in shooting, two weight categories in wrestling and one weight category in boxing.

"We're starting to discover the plan of host Thailand on how to unseat us," Mark Joseph told INQUIRER sports reporter June Navarro in an interview. He was right.

Traditionally, a host country has the option to prune down or add to the number of SEAG events, especially in areas where it has good chances of winning gold medals.

* * *

Ignacio "Ning" Ramos, the last coach to mentor a Philippine basketball team to the Olympic Games (Munich 1972), once said in an interview with veteran sportswriter Eddie Alinea that our dream of qualifying for the Olympics is doubly difficult, but added he was still keeping his fingers crossed that the country would make it.

"The most important thing to do," he said, "is to foster love of country among the national players." Without it, he added, everything would be in vain.

In Munich, the Philippines finished 13th in the tournament won by Russia. The RP team was made up of the late Eddie Ocampo, considered by basketball cognoscenti as one of Asia's all-time best guards; Narciso Bernardo, William "Bogs" Adornado, Danilo Florencio, Jaime Mariano, Joy Cleofas, Rosalio Martires, (newly re-elected vice mayor of Pasig City), the late Rogelio Melencio, Manuel Paner, the late Jun Papa, Marte Samson and former Sen. Freddie Webb.

Notably missing from the team were Robert Jaworski, who later became a senator; and Alberto "Big Boy" Reynoso because they were then serving an indefinite ban imposed by the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

* * *

At present, an all-pro team from the Philippine Basketball Association is carrying the national colors. It is coached by Chot Reyes.

Incidentally, the PBA first assumed the responsibility of representing the Philippines in 1990 in the Beijing Asiad. Under the guidance of former Sen. Robert Jaworski, the Philippines finished a respectable second behind host China.

Another PBA team, coached by Norman Black, placed fourth in the Hiroshima Asiad in 1994. The PBA Centennial Team, mentored by Tim Cone, landed third in Bangkok in 1998 while the PBA team, piloted by Jong Uchico, took fourth place in Doha in 2002. The Philippines did not play in the Qatar Games in 2006 because it was still serving a suspension imposed by the International Basketball Federation (Fiba).

* * *

Retracing history further, the Philippines first won the Asian Games title in the inaugural Asiad in New Delhi in 1951, with the late Chito Calvo calling the shots. The country last won the Asiad crown in 1962 in Jakarta under former Ysmael Steel coach Enrique Crame.

In the Olympics, the Philippines made a rousing debut in Berlin in 1936 by placing fifth under coach Chito Calvo and finished a record-setting third in the World Basketball Championship in Rio de Janeiro in 1954 under master tactician Herminio Silva, considered as one of the greatest coaches in the Philippines.

YOUTH SOCCER CLINIC: United States Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney (third from left) opens a youth football clinic in Iloilo during a recent kickoff ceremony at the Philippine Football Federation National Training Center in Barotac Nuevo town. The US Embassy brought in former American Olympic soccer stars Tiffany Roberts and Linda Hamilton (first and second from left) who conducted the clinics for both boys and girls. Roberts and Hamilton also supervised the clinics, held in partnership with the PFF, in Bacolod and Manila.

PDI PHOTO / ARNOLD ALMACEN / INQUIRER VISAYAS

JUSTINE Henin serves to Elena Vesnina during their match at the French Open. REUTERS

FRENCH OPEN

Justine, Serena singing in the rain

PARIS—JUSTINE HENIN AND SERENA Williams both had to wait through more than five hours of rain to reach the second round at the French Open.

The big difference: Williams struggled before her match was delayed, and Henin struggled before hers even started.

"I was playing more patiently and I was doing what I've been practicing," said Williams, who eventually beat Bulgarian teenager Tsvetana Pironkova 5-7, 6-1, 6-1 Sunday.

Henin, however, had little trouble beating Elena Vesnina of Russia 6-4, 6-3 on a day when only seven of the 24 scheduled matches even began at Roland Garros.

But she was annoyed with starting a Grand Slam tournament on a Sunday and the rain delay.

"The weather is appalling, and it's going to be the same throughout the weeks," said Henin, who is trying to win her third straight French Open title and fourth overall.

On Monday, 10-time Grand Slam champion Roger Federer was to play against Michael Russell, with 2003 champion Juan Carlos Ferrero, No. 4 Nikolay Davydenko and No. 5 Fernando Gonzalez also in action.

On the women's side, Venus Williams was to face Alize Cornet. Jelena Jankovic and Nadia Petrova also were scheduled to play.

Sunday's early sunshine gave way to overcast skies just before play started at 11 a.m. (0900 GMT). About an hour into the opening six matches, play was called with only Marat Safin having earned a win—he beat Fernando Vicente of Spain 6-1, 6-3, 6-1.

Henin was next up on center court, but she had to wait out more than 5½ hours of rain before playing.

The top-ranked Belgian will next face Tamira Paszek of Austria, who was one game away from the second round when rain halted her match. She returned to the court and beat Aiko Nakamura of Japan 6-4, 6-0.

Also, Safin's younger sister, Dinara Safina, defeated Yuliana Fedak of Ukraine 7-5, 6-4. On the men's side, Potito Starace of Italy beat Ivo Minar of the Czech Republic 4-6, 6-1, 6-4, 7-6 (5), and Janko Tipsarevic defeated Dusan Vemic 7-6 (3), 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 in an all-Serb match.

Williams, an eight-time Grand Slam champion who won her only French Open title in 2002, was broken four times in the first set. *AP*

James turns hot as Cavs trip Pistons

CLEVELAND—LEBRON JAMES didn't wait for the last play. He did all he needed to do before the clock got anywhere near zero.

James had 32 points, nine rebounds and nine assists in the most important game of his young NBA career, helping Cleveland to an 88-82 victory over the Detroit Pistons on Sunday night to pull the Cavaliers within 2-1 in the Eastern Conference finals.

"We ain't done yet," James said. "We've still got to hold down home court and try to make it a three-game series."

James, rising to the occasion with a hometown crowd hanging on his every move, scored 12 points in the fourth quarter and rookie Daniel Gibson came up with several key plays down the stretch to help his more celebrated teammate.

In Game 1 at Detroit, James was criticized for not taking the Cavs' final shot. In Game 2, James was swarmed by defenders and couldn't get off a clean attempt in the foul lane in the waning moments of the Pistons' second straight 79-76 win.

James left nothing to chance this time, hitting a 3-pointer with 2:34 left and a 16-foot jumper in the last 23 seconds to give Cleveland its first win in the conference finals since May 25, 1992, against Chicago.

Zydrunas Ilgauskas scored 16 points, Sasha Pavlovic 13 and Drew Gooden 12 for the Cavs, who can even the series with a win in Game 4 on Tuesday night.

Rasheed Wallace had 16 points and Chris Webber 15 to pace the Pistons, who were just 5-of-14 in the fourth and scored 19 points—only seven more than James.

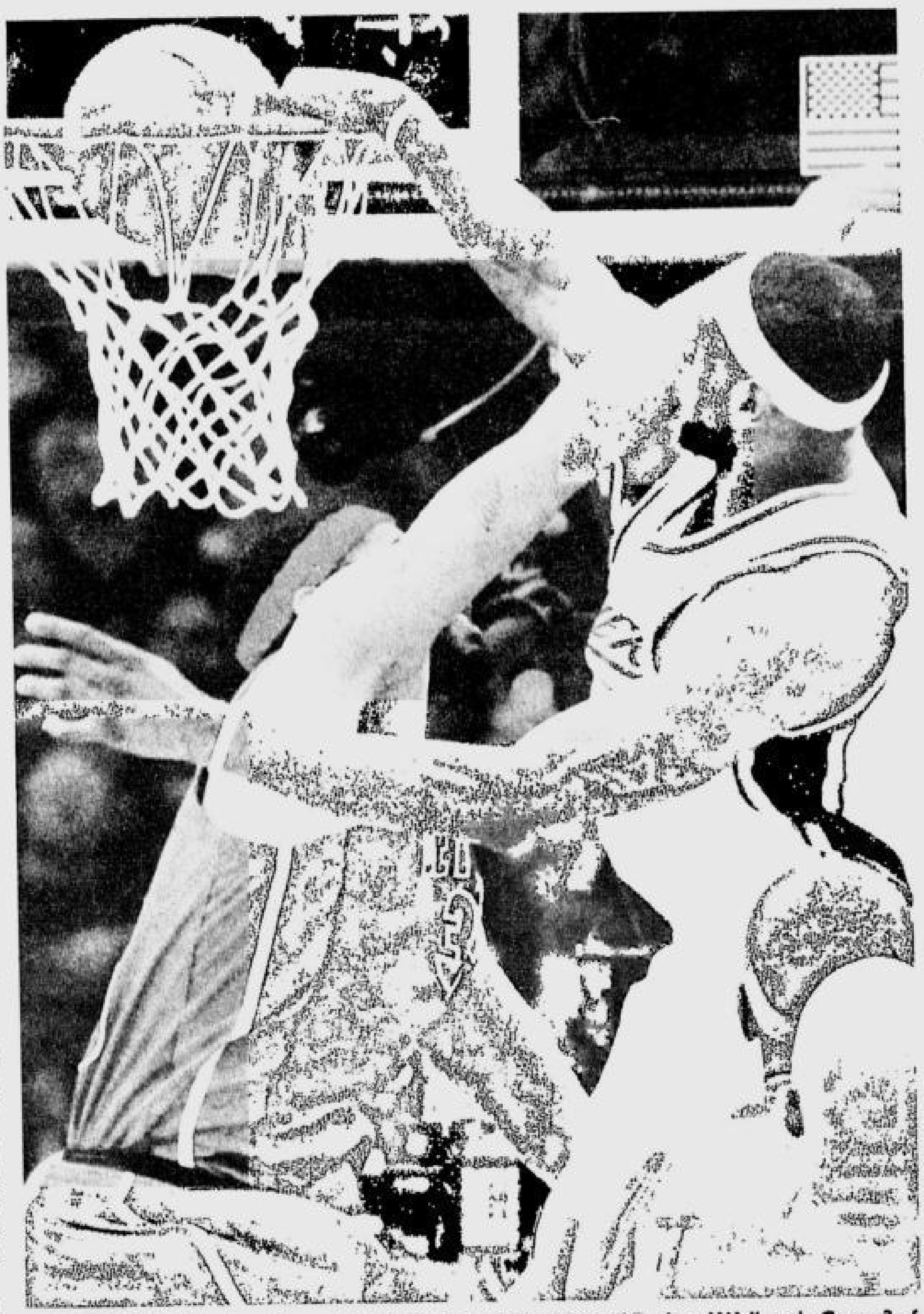
The Pistons were the East's best road team during the regular season and came in 4-1o far in these playoffs outside of Auburn Hills, Mich. Detroit, which needed seven games to put away the Cavs last year, could have effectively ended this series with another road win.

James refused to allow it.

Cleveland's superstar made sure he was ready for one of this championship-starved city's biggest nights of basketball.

James broke from his usual pregame routine, and after arriving three hours before tipoff, he shot three-pointers and jumpers on the arena's main floor for the first time this season.

"I've got to be ready," said James, who wore a black sleeveless "Witness" T-shirt during his workout. *AP*



THE CAVALIERS' Lebron James (right) dunks over the Pistons' Rasheed Wallace in Game 3 of the NBA's Eastern Conference Finals in Cleveland. REUTERS

Russel gets first crack at Federer

PARIS—ROGER FEDERER WILL BEGIN HIS quest to complete his set of grand slam titles against little-known American Michael Russell in the first round of the French Open on Monday.

With rain having washed out all but seven of Sunday's 24 scheduled matches, fans visiting Roland Garros can expect a crammed programme as organizers try to clear the backlog.

Venus Williams will attempt to join sister Serena in the second round but will have to deal with a hostile reception as she takes on local hope Alize Cornet.

In-form Serbian fourth seed Jelena Jankovic, many people's tip for the crown, will also have the crowd cheering against her when she steps out for the fourth match on Centre Court against France's Stephanie Foretz.

Federer's season had looked to be unravelling as he lost four tournaments on the trot earlier this year but his victory over nemesis Rafael Nadal in the Hamburg Masters final has energised his campaign.

The world number one has never met Russell before but, with a ranking of 68 in the world, the American is unlikely to pose much of a challenge.

With the Wimbledon, U.S. Open and Australian Open trophies already in his possession, the Swiss needs to win in Paris to join Don Budge and Rod Laver as the only men to hold all four slams at the same time.

World number four Nikolay Davydenko, French favourite Richard Gasquet and Croatian seventh seed Ivan Lubicic will also feature on the second day of the claycourt major. *Reuters*

SABBATINI: "Just a great week." AFP

Sabbatini tops 3-man playoff

FORT WORTH, TEXAS—SOUTH AFRICAN Rory Sabbatini dropped a 15-foot birdie putt on the first playoff hole to win the US PGA Crowne Plaza Invitational here Sunday, beating veterans Bernhard Langer and Jim Furyk.

Sabbatini fittingly made his winning stroke in a downpour at an event that was halted the first three days by showers, forcing the entire field to finish the third round in the morning before fighting to an early evening conclusion.

It was Masters runner-up Sabbatini's fourth career PGA title and his first since capturing last year's Nissan Open title at Riviera.

"It was just a great week," Sabbatini said. "It feels so good. I had a lot of friends here. Thank goodness I pulled through so we can celebrate." Third-ranked US star Furyk, the only top-12 player in the event, missed a long birdie effort in the playoff, the third trip to the 18th hole for each man on the day.

Sabbatini followed with his clutch putt, watching it all the way into the hole.

When German star Langer, who turns 50 in August, slid his 10-foot birdie bid an inch right of the cup, the 1.08 million-dollar top prize went to Sabbatini.

Furyk, Sabbatini and Langer each finished 72 holes on 14-under par 266 after firing final-round 67s in the afternoon.

Sabbatini completed an impressive 62 in the third round on Sunday morning to pull into the lead logjam after three rounds with Furyk, Langer and US veteran Scott Verplank, who finished on 270 after a closing 71. *AFP*

Alonso ready to conquer North America

MONTE CARLO, MONACO—AFTER winning in Asia in April and Europe in May, Fernando Alonso now looks to win in North America in June.

The Formula One series shifts to North America with the Canadian GP on June 10, followed by the United States GP. Between the both, Alonso has one just one time, the Canadian GP last year, despite winning the season title the last two years.

The 25-year-old Spaniard won the Monaco Grand Prix on Sunday and won the Malaysian Grand Prix in April.

In winning at Monaco for the second consecutive year Alonso became the first driver to win back-to-back races in Monte Carlo for different teams.

Drivers like Michael Schumacher in 1994-95 for Benetton and the late Ayrton Senna between 1989 and 1993 for McLaren won at Monaco in successive years but always for the same team.

Alonso won last year's race for Renault from the pole position after Schumacher was stripped of the honor for hindering him in qualifying.

This year he finished 4 seconds ahead of McLaren teammate Lewis Hamilton with both McLarens more than a minute ahead of Ferrari's Felipe Massa after 78 laps on the twisting 3.34-kilometer (2.076-mile) street circuit.

It was Alonso's 17th overall win and the second this season.

It was also one of the simplest.

"I've never won with more than a minute to the third guy (before)," Alonso said. "For sure, this was one of the easiest and nicest victory so far.

"It has been a fantastic weekend, no doubt, and to score this hat trick pole, fastest lap and race win is something very special and even more so here in Monaco."

Alonso and Hamilton share the lead in the standings with 38 points. Alonso has two victories so far this season compared to none for Hamilton, who has had five straight top-three finishes in his rookie season.

Being the rookie may have hindered Hamilton as he chased Alonso in the latter stages of the race.

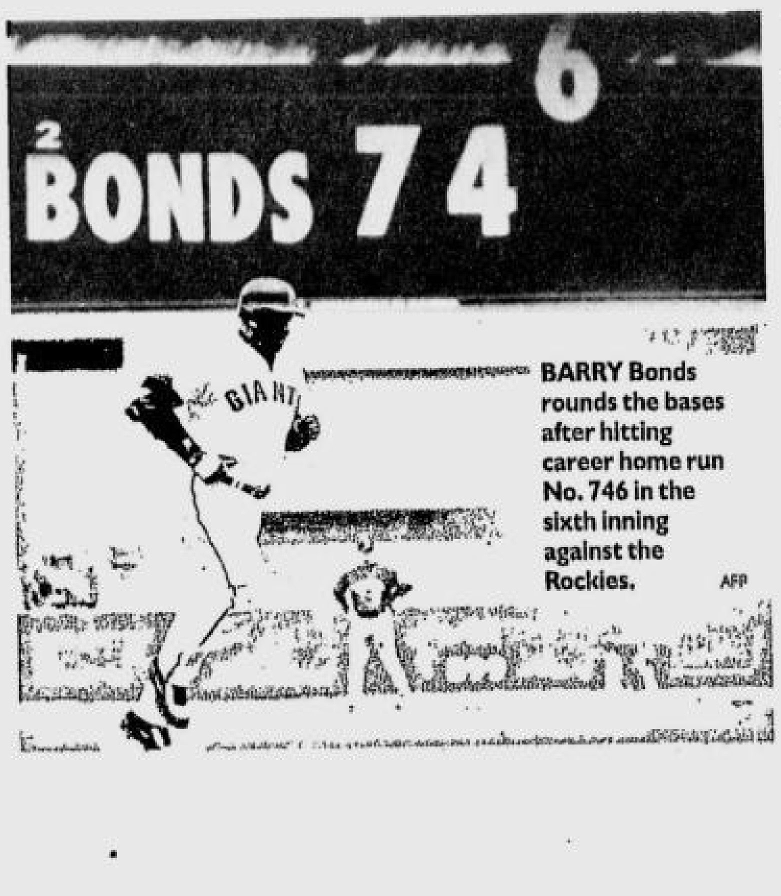
"He was obviously close to me, and I was told to take it easy. There was no point in pressuring him into a mistake, and then when he did make a mistake, crash into him," Hamilton said.

"At the end of the day, I am a rookie. I am in my first season in Formula One and I have finished second in only my first Monaco Grand Prix so I really can't complain. I've got No. 2 on my car. I am the No. 2 driver."

Alonso led virtually from start to finish, giving up the lead only on the pit stops.

Kimi Raikkonen of Ferrari, who won the first race of the season, was eighth after starting 16th when he broke a wheel steering arm in qualifying Saturday. *AP*

FERNANDO Alonso holds his trophy after winning the Monaco Formula One Grand Prix Sunday. AP



BARRY Bonds rounds the bases after hitting career home run No. 746 in the sixth inning against the Rockies. AFP

Bonds chalks 746th homer but Rockies topple Giants

SAN FRANCISCO—BARRY BONDS ENDED the second-longest home run drought of his career with his 746th homer, moving within nine of Hank Aaron's all-time homer record Sunday in San Francisco's 6-4 loss to Colorado.

Bonds had not swatted a homer in 43 times at bat over 14 games but his 12th of the season lifted him closer to Aaron's record career total of 755.

Giants outfielder Bonds, who turns 43 on July 24, had not hit a homer since May 8. His only longer drought came in April of 1998 when he needed 54 times at bat to slam the ball over the outfield fence.

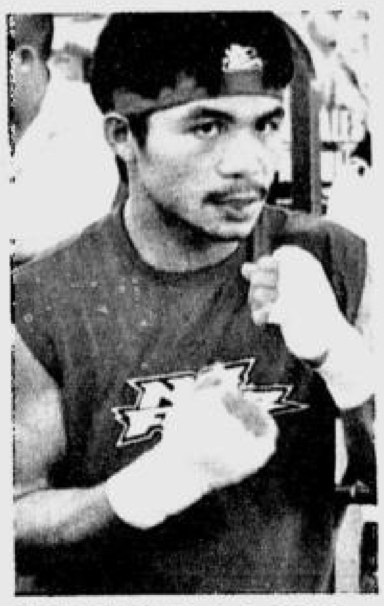
Bonds smashed a two-run blast over the centerfield fence with one out in the sixth inning off Colorado pitcher Taylor Buchholz. But the feat took a back seat to being swept at home by Colorado for the first time in club history.

"I just feel none of us are happy right now. That's how I feel," Bonds said. "Today was just a tough loss for us." Doping controversy has nagged Bonds, whose former trainer was among five men convicted in the BALCO steroid scandal. He has denied knowingly taking illegal drugs but Major League Baseball lacked steroid testing over most of his career.

Bonds' homer pulled his Giants within 4-3 and San Francisco would force extra innings, but Troy Tulowitzki and Chris Iannetta drove in 19th-inning runs for the Rockies in the 10th to win it. *AFP*

SPORTS

'Pacquiao ill-advised in avoiding Marquez'


PACQUIAO: Wrote the WBC

MARQUEZ: Choose another foe

By Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

MANNY PACQUIAO WAS ILL-ADVISED IN GIVING UP HIS STATUS as mandatory challenger to World Boxing Council (WBC) super featherweight champion Juan Manuel Marquez.

Popular boxing promoter Rex "Wakee" Salud, a close friend and adviser of Pacquiao, said yesterday the Filipino ring hero must be getting pointers from people who do not know their boxing, and the art of negotiating a boxing deal.

"Telling the WBC that he is not interested in being the mandatory challenger smacks of ill-advise," said Salud. "I don't know who is behind this. I'm not even sure if Manny understands the situation."

Late last week, Pacquiao wrote the WBC and asked president Jose Sulaiman to award the mandatory challenger status to another fighter.

The WBC installed Pacquiao as mandatory challenger after he beat Erik Morales late last year.

Pacquiao's decision came on the heels of his defeat to incumbent Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio in their congressional duel in South Cotabato's first district.

The Filipino's Canadian agent, Michael Koncz, had announced in the United States that Pacquiao signed a three-paragraph letter asking Sulaiman to designate another challenger for Marquez.

"They should not have issued that letter to the WBC," said Salud. "That's a wrong move. They should have let the WBC pressure Marquez into defending his title instead.

"I know that Sulaiman understands Pacquiao's situation—that he cannot accept a smaller purse in case of a purse-bidding as he is the more popular fighter."

Salud added that in this scenario, there would have been a strong chance of Marquez getting stripped of the title and that a Pacquiao-Humberto Soto clash would become more feasible.

Meanwhile, Salud announced that his big July 21 fight card in Cebu featuring Filipino fighters against Japanese prospects is a go, with no less than OPBF lightweight champ Randy Suico defending his title against mandatory challenger Koji Samejima.

Also set to battle tough Japanese opponents are world-ranked Eriberto "Yukka" Gejon and Jimrex "The Executioner" Jaca, who are both managed by Salud.

Batang Coke edges SLR 5

MYKEL VILLANUEVA SCORED 16 POINTS to lead Batang Coca-Cola-Caloocan past Batang Sta. Lucia-Marikina, 49-44, while John David Bertis and John MattewVillamil tallied eight points apiece as Batang Ginebra-Antipolo subdued Batang San Miguel-San Juan, 41-36, yesterday in the Burlington-Batang PBA Basketball League at the Araneta Coliseum.

Batang Coca-Cola-Caloocan and Batang Ginebra-Antipolo wound up their elimination round campaign in Division I with a 2-3 (win-loss) record, tying Batang San Miguel-San Juan for third place.

However, on the strength of a better quotient Batang Coca-Cola Caloocan earned the right to battle second placed Batang Air 21-Manila I in a playoff to determine which team will face Batang Talk N Text-Quezon City I in the finals of the tournament for kids aged 9-10 years old.

The Batang Phone Pals cemented their place in the knock out championship by completing a five-game sweep of Division I.

Batang TnT-QC II beat Batang Red Bull-San Juan, 78-64, while Batang Sta. Lucia-Antipolo routed Batang Alaska-Marikina, 115-47.

SYVIE Gay Cabanag is expected to provide defensive muscle anew for the FEU Lady Tams. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Lyceum tossers stake clean record against Lady Tams

THE CONSISTENCY OF ITS KEY TRIO WILL BE CRUCIAL when Lyceum seeks its fourth straight victory in the Shakey's V-League tournament.

The Lady Pirates—backstopped by Sherrilyn Carillo, Josielyn Degorostiza and Beverly Boto—will try to keep the solo lead against Far Eastern University at 1 p.m. today at The Arena in San Juan.

"Looking at the other teams, I think we have a chance at defeating them," said Lyceum mentor Emil Lontoc. "But it still depends on how the players consistently do."

La Salle and San Sebastian, the powerhouse squads in the UAAP and the NCAA, will clash at 5 p.m., while Ateneo will shoot for its second straight triumph against winless Letran at 3 p.m.

The Lady Pirates, who also drew a huge boost from guest player Cristina Salak, stunned two-time NCAA champion San Sebastian in straight sets last Thursday, 25-22, 25-21, 25-22, for their third straight victory.

Spiker Rachel Anne Daquis, though, will be at the forefront when the Lady Tamaraws aim for their second win after a grueling five-set decision over Adamson, 25-23, 25-18, 19-25, 21-25, 16-14, last week.

The Lady Archers, running second with a 2-1 slate, will try to improve on their surprisingly shaky Thursday victory over winless Adamson.

Banking on Jackie Alarca, Amy Guanco and Thai Sanorseang Areerat, the Lady Archers fought back from two sets down for a 23-25, 18-25, 25-17, 25-19, 15-10 win over the Lady Falcons.

San Sebastian, which also has Thai import Jeng Bualee at its disposal, joined Ateneo, University of Santo Tomas and Far Eastern at 1-1 when it bowed to Lyceum after an opening-day win over Letran.

The Lady Eagles, meanwhile, will try to sustain the momentum from their stunning 18-25, 25-21, 25-19, 20-25, 15-10 triumph over UAAP champion Santo Tomas despite the absence of their key guest player.

Power-hitting Thai Namphon Intuan won't be suiting up for the Lady Eagles due to a knee injury in her last outing.

Jasmine W. Payo

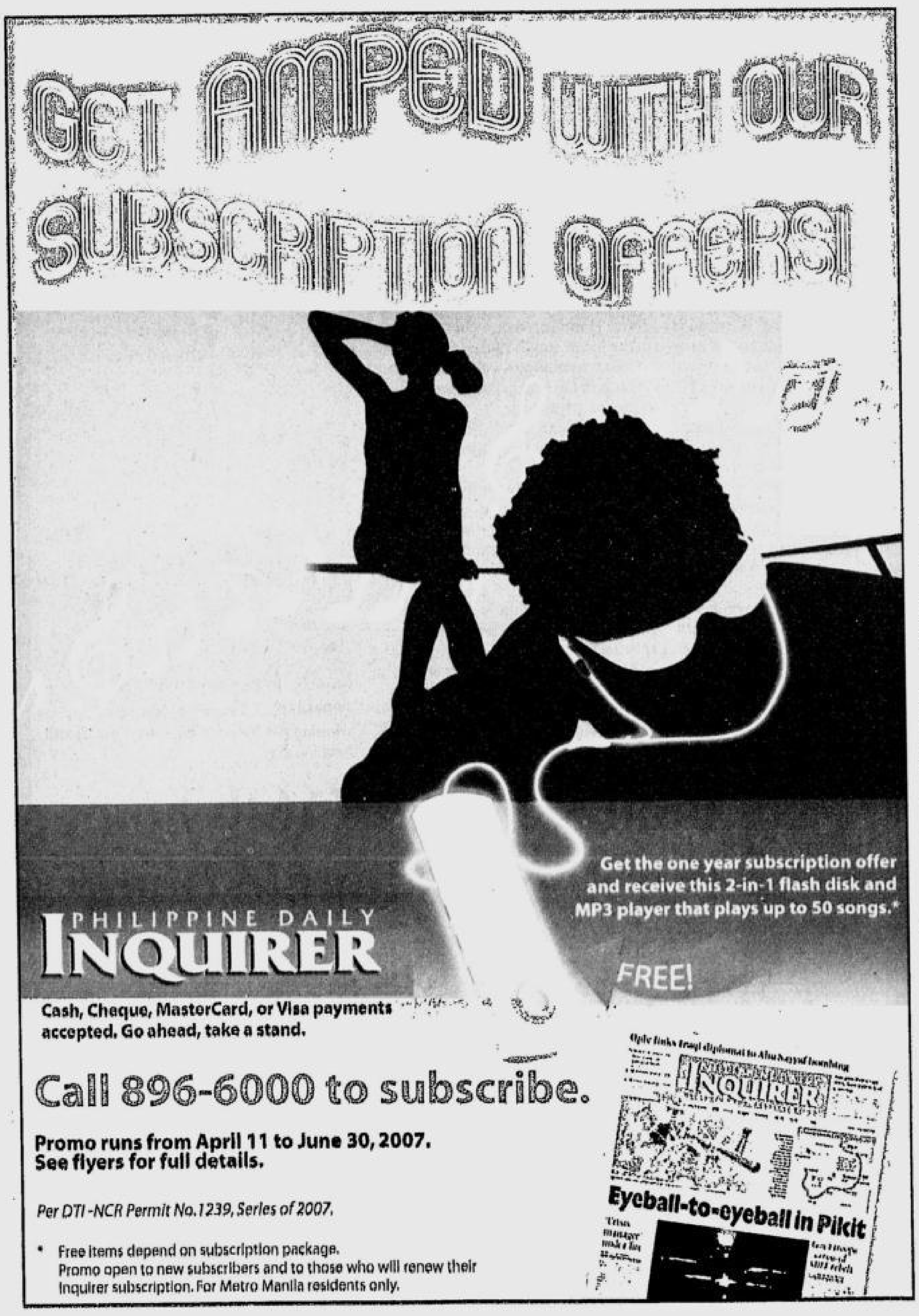
STANDINGS	W	L
Lyceum	3	0
La Salle	2	1
UST	1	1
S. Sebastian	1	1
Far Eastern	1	1
Ateneo	1	1
Adamson	0	2
Letran	0	2

GAMES TODAY (*The Arena, San Juan*)

1 p.m.—FEU vs Lyceum

3 p.m.—Letran vs Ateneo

5 p.m.—La Salle vs San Sebastian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Eyeball-to-eyeball in Pikit

Prenza High spikers down St. Jude, keep GVL top spot

UNBEATEN PRENZA HIGH SCHOOL BEAT St. Jude, 25-19, 25-12, Sunday to lead Bracket B in the 3rd Shakeys Girls Volleyball Leaque at the Ateneo Blue Eagle Gym.

Lorena Simon and Michell Bautista, accounted for 39 points between them, including 21 kills, as Prenza climbed to a 3-0 card.

In Bracket A, Makati Gospel Church-New Life Academy trounced Valenzuela High, 25-18, 25-9, Saturday and then stunned Batasan Hills High School, 25-22, 22-25, 28-26, Sunday to raise its record to 2-1.

Santo Tomas subdued Grace Christian School, 25-19, 25-19, behind the 26 points of Rhea Dimaculangan, to pace Bracket C with a 2-0 slate.

Kim Fajardo and Maruja Banaticla supported Dimaculangan with a combined 20 points.

In other games, Diliman Preparatory School won both its games against Holy Spirit QC, 25-11, 25-9, and UP Integrated School, 25-17, 25-11, for a 2-0 record in Bracket D.

Defending champion University of the East, survived the Imus-based Pagibig Unida School 22-25, 25-22, 25-23, Saturday to stay on top of Bracket A with a 2-0 mark.

Trailing 23-15, Pagibig Unida dropped 8 straight points to draw level, only to lose the third set and the match on a service and net error.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Pasay hosts NCA derby today

PASAY CITY HOSTS THE NATIONAL COCKers' Association derby today with the biggest names in Philippine cockfighting taking part.

Hosts are Boyet Joson and Ellan Nagano .

Expected to field their seasoned entries are NCA members Rep. Iggy Arroyo, Gov. Ito Ynares, Patrick Antonio, Rey Briones, Ric de Guzman, Michael Co, Lando Celebre, JV Magsaysay, Ruel Ricafort, Edgar Santos, Chair Rudy Albano and Pico Berin.

Also expected to figure prominently in the battle for top prizes are the entries of Sec. Ronnie Puno, Manny Pacquiao, Jerry Ramos, Tony Lasalla, Benjie Lim, Edwin Santos, Jun Santiago, Essie Mallillin, Edwin Abella, Boy Jiao, Manny Santos, Efren Canlas, Mario Villamor, Jun Jingco, Jet Fernando, the Madlangbayan Brothers and Ricky Valencia.

Ellinwood Centennial Cup set at Orchard

THE 5TH ANNUAL INVITATional golf tournament sponsored by the Ellinwood Malate Church will be held on Thursday at the Orchard's Palmer course in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Shotgun tee off is at 8:30 a.m. Registration starts at 6:30.

Dubbed as the Centennial Cup in commemoration of the Ellinwood Centenary this year, the fund-raising tournament is geared towards expanding and sustaining the various social service ministries and projects of Ellinwood, such as street dwellers ministry, prison ministry, medical missions, disaster relief, and Cotabato mission for refugees.

At stake are handsome prizes for the winners on top of giveaways for all players and raffle prizes.

Tickets are available at the EMC Church office at 1660 Dr. Vasquez Street, Malate, or they may be ordered by phone through Ms. Paz Pagura at 400-9972 cell 0918-9372055, Leah Villa 851-8546, or Nellie Flores 641-5060.

Constant and Nellie Flores are chairs of the tournament's steering committee with Eduardo Ricardo as vice-chair, Rolly Dizon, Joel Bodegon and Jesse and Bethel Garcia as consultants.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Magic Dancer (7), Worth Ur While (5), Strong Will (2), Love Talk (6)

Race 2—(Fental/Qrt/Tri)—Boss UFO Naman (11), Miata (3), Cirque Du Soleil (2), Kapuso (10), Rose N Fire (7)

Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—King Anthony (4), Manila's Style (3), Prince Aidan/Prince Ferdie (7), Kim Possible (1), Sweet Luvin (2)

Race 4—(Fents/Qrt/Tri)—Lightning Strike (6), Scarab (10), Golden Lance (3), Cool cielo (2), Bumpy Johnson (7)

Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Red Hot Water (3), Advance Party (2), Dancing Slew (7), Elusive Quality (11), Hepburn (8)

Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Manila's Smile (5), BMI Baby (3), Spinning Bullet (2), Reporter (1)

Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Triz)—Mainstay (1), Letshaveaparty (9), Daddy's Girl (4), First of All (8), Perfect Time (3)

Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Blue Iris (1), Air Power (6), Pepe (5), My Sheikh (2), Golden Africa (3), Guts (9)

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Dry spell seen to push inflation up to 2.8%

But strong peso tempers surge in consumer prices

IN THIS ISSUE

- **Peso** strengthens further vs dollar /B3
- **BIR** to run after property tax evaders /B5

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S ANNUAL INFLATION IS EXPECTED to inch up in May over that of April, partly due to supply-related disruptions caused by the summer drought, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said that the expected rate in May should fall between 2.1 and 2.8 percent—higher than the 2.3 percent year-on-year rate in April.

"We expect some slight bias in the May inflation forecast," Tetangco explained. "Aside from the base effects of the (value-added tax) tapering off, oil prices were higher.

"Supply conditions in some areas were a little less favorable because of the dry spell."

But Tetangco added that the upsurge in consumer prices was tempered by a strong peso, cheap imports and generally cautious monetary policy.

Inflation measures the average increase in the prices of basic goods and services consumed by a typical household.

The BSP earlier this month said that the overall inflation outlook for this year remained favorable, although it added that high money supply growth due to strong remittances and investment inflows remained a concern.

The BSP expects inflation this year to come in below the official target of 4 to 5 percent, after 6.2 percent in 2006.

The peso has been hovering at six-year highs due to strong investment inflows, especially after the relatively peaceful elections this month.

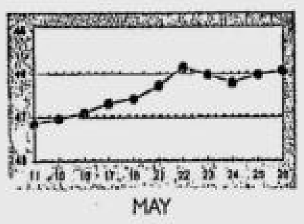
The central bank has left its overnight borrowing rate at 7.5 percent and its lending rate at 9.75 percent, even after inflation reached a 20-year low of 2.2 percent in March.

On May 10, it also widened the coverage of its short-term special deposit account window to mop up funds.

DRY SPELL/ B5

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱45.96 = $1

As of 5 p.m., May 28, 2007

STOCK MARKET

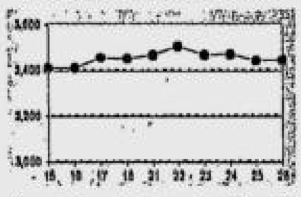
Shares close flat

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED flat due to the absence of strong leads, dealers said.

They said the market was consolidating after its recent record-breaking run, and taking a breather before the next major rally as the long-term outlook for the domestic economy remains bullish.

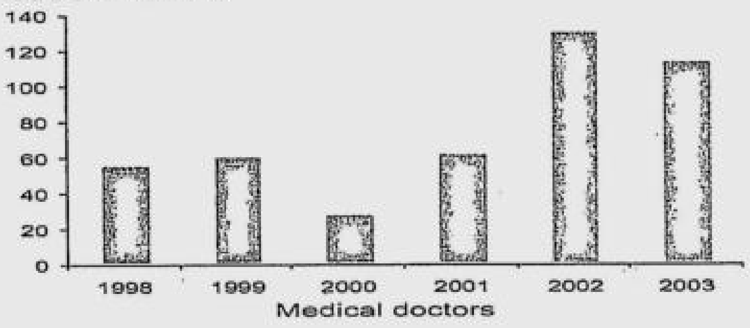
SHARES/ B5

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Exodus of health workers 1998 to 2003



Medical tourism bid imperiled by workers' exodus

By Daxim L. Lucas

(Conclusion)

SPECIAL REPORT

THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRESident Macapagal-Arroyo wants to make the Philippines a hub for medical tourism in the region to compete for the estimated $188 billion that will be spent on the industry worldwide by 2013.

This goal, however, faces one very big roadblock: the country's healthcare system is being bled dry of its most precious resource—its highly skilled medical personnel.

According to Emmanuel Leyco of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM), the continuing exodus of Filipino doctors and nurses to better career prospects and higher paying jobs abroad is undermining the government's quest to attract more dollars from cash-rich foreign retirees and medical patients.

If this trend continues, the country will lose its chance to profit from the lucrative medical tourism industry, he warned. More importantly, however, even local patients will soon suffer the ill effects of the migration of doctors and nurses.

The AIM professor, who teaches courses on healthcare management, acknowledged that there is tremendous potential for the coun-

MEDICAL/ B3

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TOYOTA moving forward

Greenspan strikes again

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

A MEXICAN FAMILY CROSSED THE BORDER illegally into America, but the husband couldn't find any work. His family was so hungry that he walked to a place at the foot of a hill and began to pray. "Lord, show me a way to feed my family."

At that moment, an African-American came over the top of the hill, struggling with a broken bag of grocery and a large round cheese. Suddenly, the cheese slipped out of his hand and rolled down the hill, stopping at the Mexican's feet.

When the Mexican opened his eyes, he saw the cheese and gave thanks for the food. He ran all the way home and gave the cheese to his wife saying, "Make Nachos."

His wife asked whether he preferred cheese enchiladas or burritos. "No", said the husband, "God sent this with a message. As I ran home, I kept hearing a voice yelling . . . . . That's NACH-YO CHEESE!"

In Las Vegas, there was a Catholic Church, but many worshippers put casino chips into the basket when it was passed around. As they got chips from so many different casinos, the church devised a method to sort them out and cash them: They send them to a nearby monastery where the work is performed by chip monks.

I apologize to readers who don't like my wife being the butt of so many jokes. But then, she has a big butt.

* * *

The DOW and most other markets were making record highs until Alan Greenspan predicted a Chinese bubble. As a free agent and a highly intelligent economist, he is entitled to his view, but he should not broadcast it because his opinion carries such a lot of weight that he is capable of bringing down markets on a global scale. Fortunately, the downturn, though severe, lasted only one day, so investors are no longer exhibiting irrational anxiety.

The CSI 300 index doubled last year and has risen 90 percent in the first five months of 2007, so the index has almost quadrupled. Obviously, it cannot continue to climb at that pace and sooner or later, there MUST be a correction.

The last time, it fell 9 percent and markets around the world dropped sharply but since then, it has risen 50 percent, so a 10-percent correction after a 280-percent rise is minor and even a 20-percent correction would not necessarily spell the end of the bull run.

Investors are beginning to realize this and will be less likely to panic unless there are fundamental changes, which I do not foresee.

China is trying to slow its runaway economy, it has raised interest rates twice, it has increased the reserve requirement of banks five times to 11.5 percent and it has allowed a greater degree of appreciation of the Yuan by widening the band.

China is embarrassed by its $200-billion trade surplus just as the United States is embarrassed by its $323 million trade deficit.

China will not be pressured by the visit of PAULSON, but both sides will make some concessions, partly to avoid a tariff on selected goods and partly to avoid overheating. A growth rate of 11.1 percent is not only unsustainable but also undesirable, as it will lead to inflation.

China wants to divert some of its exports to home consumption. There now exists a middle class numbering hundreds of millions and they are clamoring for computers, cars, IPODS, digital cameras and LCD flat screens.

The economy needs to slow to 10 percent and then perhaps to 9 percent. I do not see any major cutbacks ahead of the 2008 Olympiad, which I am sure is going to be the most spectacular and costly yet.

In 2010, there will be a huge exhibition in Shanghai, expected to attract 100 million people, so

BEARBULL/ B3

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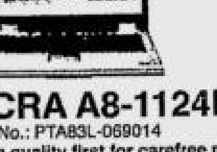

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 28, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCK	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.1	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc	12.25	12.25	11.5	11.75	54,800
73	42.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	68	68.5	67.5	67.5	458,500
71	30.5	Banco de Oro Universal Bank	66.5	66.5	65.5	65.5	346,400
935	630	China Banking Corp.	900	900	900	900	1,710
40	19	Chinatrust (Phils.) Comm'l Banking Corp.	38	38	38	38	18,000
20	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	300
124	64	Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	117	120	116	116	17,190
0.83	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.54	0.55	3,660,000
68.5	29	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company	66	67	66	66.5	1,022,900
55	30.5	Philippine National Bank	47.5	50	47.5	49	440,600
68	38.5	Philippine Savings Bank	64	64	64	64	2,000
72	40	Philippine Bank of Communications	52	52	52	52	1,000
39.57	13.04	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	32	32	31.5	31.5	719,700
90	41	Security Bank Corp.	84.5	85	84.5	84.5	154,100
66	40.55	Union Bank of the Philippines	65.5	65.5	65	65.5	2,182,600
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
0.85	0.6	Bankard Inc.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	710,000
7.7	1.5	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	7.1	7.1	6.9	7	424,000
39	27	First Metro Investment Corp.	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	10,000
2,000.00	1,500.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,650.00	1,660.00	1,650.00	1,650.00	810
5	4.15	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.4	4.4	4.35	4.35	6,560,000
2.4	0.97	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1,308,000
1,005.00	210	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	585	585	580	580	2,010
2,250.00	1,895.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,100.00	2,120.00	2,100.00	2,120.00	310
1.94	1.08	Vantage Corp	1.7	1.7	1.68	1.68	1,760,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
63.5	41	First Gen Corp	60.5	60.5	59.5	60.5	784,300
82.5	40.5	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	80	80	79	79	587,700
12.75	6.7	Manila Water Company Inc.	11.75	12	11.5	11.5	1,115,600
96	13.25	Manila Electric Company A	90	92	90	91	206,800
97	20.25	Manila Electric Company B	91	92.5	90	91.5	1,995,400
6.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6	6	5.9	6	17,782,000
5.7	3.35	Petron Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.1	1,248,000
1.62	0.89	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.42	1.42	45,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
5.9	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	94,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.18	2.2	1,210,000
2.75	1.24	CADP Group Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.8	1.8	214,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	8,000
61	30	Jollibee Foods Corp.	55	57	55	57	95,500
10.25	10	Phil. Tob. Flue Curing and Redry Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,000
1.82	0.69	RFM Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.4	1.4	951,000
4.05	2.3	Roxas Holdings	2.36	2.36	2.34	2.36	230,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. A	67.5	67.5	66	66.5	84,400
88	68	San Miguel Corp. B	77	78	75.5	77.5	108,500
0.51	0.2	Swift Foods Inc.	0.34	0.41	0.34	0.41	480,000
22	15.5	Universal Robina Corp	15.75	15.75	15.5	15.75	3,018,100
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
5.7	1.07	EEI Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.3	5.4	2,010,000
4.5	1.06	Fortune Cement Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.15	4.15	108,000
9.2	4.2	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.5	8.6	8.5	8.6	314,000
7	1.2	Republic Cement Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	235,000
2	0.745	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc	1.84	1.86	1.82	1.84	7,019,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	1.42	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.9	6.1	5.9	6	5,102,000
1.1	0.45	Interphil Laboratories Inc. A	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	100,000
0.82	0.5	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	40,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
7.5	5.1	Panasonic Manufacturing Phils. Corp	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	9,000
0.43	0.08	Picop Resources Inc	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	4,080,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
4.05	1.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	368,000
0.0925	0.022	AJO net Holdings Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.0725	0.0725	15,800,000
1.12	0.17	APC Group Inc.	1.08	1.12	1.04	1.1	190,600,000
0.018	0.006	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. A	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	437,500,000
0.019	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. B	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.014	13,800,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	9	9.1	9	9.1	1,826,000
0.017	0.0065	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.015	138,700,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.2	6.4	1,607,000
1.04	0.45	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	530,000
2.26	0.83	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.12	2.26	2.12	2.22	19,494,000
566.67	272.02	Ayala Corp.	515	515	510	510	58,620
14	7.92	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.75	14	13.75	14	89,600
6.9	0.7	Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	4.55	4.65	4.5	4.65	90,000
4.75	0.97	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.55	4.6	4.5	4.5	6,069,000
9.2	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.7	529,000
6	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.7	2,850,000
3.55	1.14	House of Investments Inc.	3	3	2.8	2.8	164,000
14.5	5.3	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	12.25	12.25	12	12.25	718,200
0.43	0.185	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	160,000
0.88	0.1	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
14	0.89	Magnum Holdings Inc.	12.25	14	12.25	14	2,721,900
4.55	0.19	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.15	4.4	4.1	4.4	2,772,000
5.4	1.2	PAL Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.75	3.65	3.75	475,000
0.57	0.155	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.54	7,050,000
445	205	SM Investments Corp.	440	440	430	430	30,810
2.2	0.6	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.62	1.8	1.62	1.8	7,000
0.7	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.66	0.7	0.64	0.7	188,180,000
0.85	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.69	0.69	110,000
1.56	0.68	South China Resources Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.36	1.4	460,000
0.24	0.08	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.19	0.205	0.19	0.19	24,600,000
0.55	0.155	Zeus Holdings Inc	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	100,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.75	A Brown Company Inc.	1.82	1.86	1.82	1.84	4,485,000
0.58	0.3	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.46	0.5	0.46	0.5	1,320,000
16	8.54	Ayala Land Inc.	15.25	15.25	14.75	15	9,470,300
1.72	0.95	Belle Corp.	1.6	1.66	1.6	1.62	14,193,000
3.9	1.18	C and P Homes Inc.	3.6	3.75	3.6	3.75	845,000
4.7	1.8	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.45	4.45	4.4	4.4	172,000
2	1	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp.A	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	96,000
2.1	1	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp.B	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	87,000
4.5	1.42	City and Land Developers Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	11,000
2.9	1	Cityland Development Corp.	2.65	2.7	2.65	2.65	74,000
0.6	0.24	Crown Equities Inc.	0.55	0.6	0.55	0.6	23,710,000
0.59	0.165	Cyber Bay Corp	0.51	0.54	0.51	0.54	12,710,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.79	0.8	0.77	0.78	22,030,000
0.28	0.027	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.24	0.24	27,430,000
1.12	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.87	0.95	0.87	0.95	49,950,000
2.04	0.93	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.9	1.92	1.88	1.92	17,133,000
0.016	0.0038	Interport Resources Corp. A	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	7,100,000
0.016	0.005	Interport Resources Corp. B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	8,000,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	1,920,000
0.99	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.77	0.79	0.76	0.78	3,110,000
4.25	1.26	Megaworld Corp.	3.85	3.95	3.65	3.7	107,560,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	213,000
0.26	0.1	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.21	0.225	0.21	0.215	14,780,000
0.87	0.25	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	1,190,000
3.95	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.5	3.75	3.5	3.75	116,000
23	9.6	Robinson Land Corp.	20	20.25	20	20	3,390,800
5.2	1.23	SM Development Corp.	4.9	4.95	4.8	4.8	429,000
13	6.9	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12.5	12.75	12.5	12.5	7,926,800
0.96	0.51	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.69	0.69	580,000
0.28	0.06	Uniwide Holdings Inc	0.28	0.28	0.25	0.26	23,140,000
1.74	0.3	Zipporah Realty Holdings Inc	1.38	1.38	1.3	1.34	1,185,000
		MEDIA					
32	13.5	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	32	31.5	32	102,000
1.14	0.97	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp	1.07	1.04	1.07	1.04	114,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.12	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.56	1.58	1.56	1.58	2,174,000
1,445.00	820	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,335.00	1,340.00	1,330.00	1,340.00	112,060
2,820.00	1,700.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,525.00	2,560.00	2,525.00	2,555.00	92,130
7.9	3.1	Pilipino Telephone Corp	6.9	6.9	6.7	6.8	1,239,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.155	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.3	0.28	0.3	43,740,000
9	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	8.8	8.8	8.4	8.8	62,000
7.6	2	IPVG Corp.	6.8	6.9	6.7	6.8	1,259,000
0.0875	0.046	ISM Communications Corp.	0.0825	0.0875	0.0775	0.0775	155,400,000
0.033	0.011	Imperial Resources Inc. A	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	15,000,000
2.9	1.78	Ionics Inc.	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	155,000
0.0675	0.038	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	400,000
1.84	1.12	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.46	1.54	1.46	1.54	391,000
0.06	0.027	Philweb Corp.	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.049	94,900,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc	2.16	2.16	2.14	2.14	310,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.88	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	217,000
6.8	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	6	6	5.8	5.9	8,521,000
32	12.5	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	29	29	28.5	29	480,100
2.14	0.86	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.84	1.9	1.84	1.9	382,000
1.74	0.8	Lorenzo Shipping Corp	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.18	60,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.6	3.8	3.7	3.75	1,195,000
4.4	2.8	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.4	2,263,000
0.76	0.18	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc	0.72	0.74	0.68	0.68	16,740,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.9	230,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.15	3.7	3.15	[illegible]	[illegible]
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
7	2.75	Easycall Comm. Phils. Inc.	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	1,000
41	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	41	41	22	25	52,400
4.95	1.84	Macroasia Corp.	4.75	4.95	4.75	4.95	4,959,000
16.75	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	16.25	16.25	16	16.25	2,410,700
30	9.5	Paxys Inc	26	26	25.5	26	801,400
		MINING					
0.018	0.007	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	1,290,500,000
7.6	2.85	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.5	1,177,000
7.7	2.85	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.6	1,283,000
21.25	5.6	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	19.5	19.5	18	18	6,018,400
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. A	12	12.25	12	12.25	524,200
4	1.7	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	10,000
2.36	0.0602	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	2.14	2.36	2.14	2.32	87,881,000
0.35	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.28	11,830,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	4,160,000
0.038	0.0154	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.036	0.036	0.035	0.036	108,300,000
0.041	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.039	0.039	0.038	0.038	115,100,000
0.024	0.0075	Omico Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.02	158,000,000
6.1	2.65	Philex Mining Corp.	5.9	6.1	5.9	6	25,505,000
30	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	27	27	26.5	27	51,900
1.2	0.25	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.16	1.2	1.1	1.12	18,585,000
1.8	0.41	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.52	1.54	1.48	1.48	6,601,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.23	Basic Consolidated Inc	0.45	0.45	0.43	0.43	7,210,000
0.021	0.008	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.021	377,800,000
0.022	0.009	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	120,500,000
14.62	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.5	75,200
0.024	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.024	0.024	0.022	0.022	944,800,000

BY INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK

CURRENCIES

May 28, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.744103	1.000000	46.2370
Japan	Yen	0.006105	0.008205	0.3794
United Kingdom	Pound	1.476524	1.984300	91.7481
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.095121	0.127833	5.9106
Switzerland	Franc	0.605997	0.814399	37.6554
Canada	Dollar	0.689304	0.926355	42.8319
Singapore	Dollar	0.487297	0.654879	30.2796
Australia	Dollar	0.609720	0.819403	37.8867
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.973853	2.652661	122.6511
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.198438	0.266681	12.3305
Brunei	Dollar	0.485707	0.652742	30.1808
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000114	0.0053
Thailand	Baht	0.022966	0.030864	1.4271
UAE	Dirham	0.202653	0.272346	12.5925
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.343900	62.1379
Korea	Won	0.000801	0.001077	0.0498
China	Yuan**	0.097234	0.130673	6.0419
Brazil	Real	0.381807	0.513110	23.7247
Denmark	Kroner	0.134256	0.180427	8.3424
India	Rupee	0.018473	0.024826	1.1479
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.219499	0.294985	13.6392
Mexico	New Peso	0.069002	0.092732	4.2876
New Zealand	Dollar	0.540144	0.725900	33.5634
South Africa	Rand	0.104656	0.140647	6.5031
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022374	0.030068	1.3903

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—May 25, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.

** Asian time closing rate as of May 25, 2007

Digitel allots $250M for expansion

By Riza T. Olchondra

DIGITAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS Phils. Inc. (Digitel), the telecommunications unit of JG Summit Holdings Inc., said it would spend as much as $250 million to expand its cellular and fixed line networks.

"Our main focus is to increase the number of cell sites to improve the quality of services," Digitel president Lance Gokongwei said during the company's stockholders' meeting yesterday.

Digitel offers landline and broadband services, as well as cellular services under the brand Sun Cellular, the third largest mobile phone network in the country.

Sun Cellular CEO Charles A. Lim said in a briefing that $200 million would be spent to expand to 3G capacity.

Expansion to 3G means that Sun Cellular would be able to offer video streaming services to subscribers.

Sun plans to achieve this by putting up 800 additional cell sites on top of the current 1,600, for a total of 2,400 cell sites by yearend.

Digitel's landline and broadband businesses, meanwhile, would be allocated $40 million to $50 million, wireline business head Policarpio Pau said.

Company officials said the capital expansion would be financed through external borrowings and internally-generated funds.

"Generally, 15 percent (of the amount) comes from equity, and the rest from borrowings, such as supplier's credit," senior vice president for legal services William Pamintuan said.

"This will give us more sites in more areas, making us ready to commercially launch 3G by next year," Lim said.

He said the company was already testing the service and would prefer to hold off a commercial launch until the prices of handsets drop.

"Our subscribers have increased from almost two million last year to about three million as of the first quarter of this year. With increased capacity, we can double last year's subscribers by end of year," Lim said.

Aside from landline and broadband services, Digitel also offers a wireless local loop service, voice over Internet and NetMedic, a web-based application service that allows doctors and administrators to get quick and easy access to patients' records.

Sun, meanwhile, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Digitel established in 2003. Its position as a latecomer in the market allowed it to put up infrastructure at lower cost than the earlier players Globe Telecom Inc. and Smart Communications Inc. However, it also needed to differentiate itself from the incumbents, which it did by pioneering unlimited text and call services.

Peso strengthens further vs $

Currency closes near seven-year peak

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY CLIMBED back to near its seven-year peak, closing at 45.96 against the US dollar after hitting an intra-day high of 45.85.

The local currency snapped a three-day losing streak and closed stronger from Friday's finish of 46.05 against the greenback.

But trading volume at the Philippine Dealing System softened to $556.55 million yesterday, from Friday's $799 million.

Since the start of the year, the peso has gained by P3.07 or over 6 percent against the US dollar.

Across the region, currency traders said investors were shifting funds to emerging market currencies, benefiting the Indonesian rupiah, Philippine peso and Malaysian ringgit, at the expense of the Japanese yen, Taiwanese dollar and Singaporean dollar.

Traders said investors resumed betting on high-yielding currencies, now shrugging off the warnings by former US Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan of a fallout in Chinese stocks.

At the local market, the peso continued to be supported by heavy remittances from overseas Filipino workers ahead of the June opening of the school year.

Foreign inflows to local stocks and bonds have likewise added to the peso's strength, especially after the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' recent moves to mop up excess liquidity had nudged up yields of domestic government securities.

The BSP recently finetuned its special deposit account facility for it to become a more potent tool to siphon excess cash.

It opened access to these higher-yielding SDAs to banks' trust departments and the government corporate sector.

The Philippine Stock Exchange, meanwhile, also gained 1.8 points yesterday to close at 3,443.56.

As of May 11, the country has now attracted $1.26 billion in net portfolio inflows, dwarfing the $683 million recorded during the same period last year, based on the latest BSP data.

Meanwhile, the London-based global economics unit of American Express Bank said an uncertain Fed rates outlook and rising international risks from China and volatile oil prices would likely rock stock markets in coming months.

In addition to rates concerns, it said corporate profits were slowing, bonds were looking less expensive and risk markets still threatened contagion.

"But it looks too early to call an end to the long-term equities bull trend—we expect stock markets to be comfortably above current levels in a year's time, even allowing for any interim correction," Amex said.

Amex added that the global economy could probably shrug off current high oil prices.

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Medical tourism bid imperiled by health workers' exodus

From page B1

try to profit from patients in developed countries seeking cost-efficient medical treatment from abroad.

"But it is going to be difficult," Leyco said. "[The quality] of our healthcare workers are well-known abroad, but if they hear that they are all leaving [to work overseas], that could cast doubt on the quality or the perception of our healthcare services."

Hollowing out

Data compiled by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) reveal that an average of 10,000 registered nurses leave the country for foreign shores each year.

The number of doctors leaving remain in the hundreds, but is steadily rising with each passing year.

"We have lost over 100,000 healthcare professionals over the last 10 years," Leyco said, adding that many of those registered as departing nurses are actually doctors who opted for an easier path to go abroad.

Leyco believes that the local healthcare system is already facing a silent crisis—one that is only being held in check by the steady stream of nursing graduates who have progressively less and less on-the-job experience and skills each year.

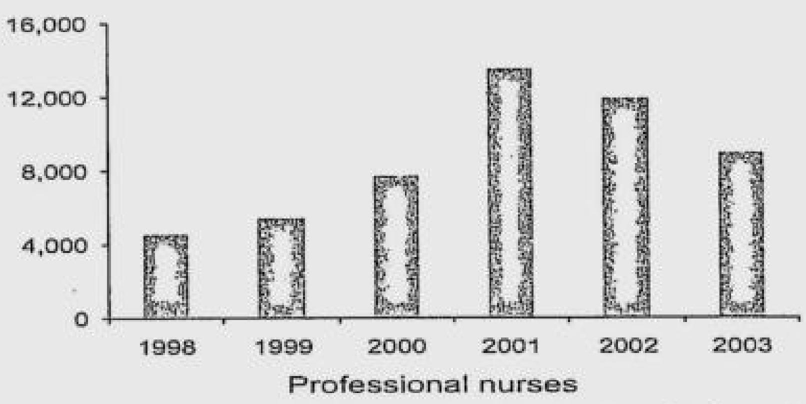
Indeed, data from the University of the Philippines College of Medicine show that the attrition rate in some state-run hospitals run to as high as 90 percent each year.

"This means that by next year, nine out of ten nurses at the hospital you go to will all be new," Leyco said. "The rest would have left for abroad already."

With doctors joining this trend, it will only be a matter of time before the quality of service starts to decline, the AIM professor warned.

If the country's competitiveness in terms of quality is in danger, it is still very competitive in terms of pricing, with the cost even of advanced medical treatment here standing at only half the price of equivalent treatment in the US.

Exodus of health workers
1998 to 2003



But even competing in terms of price has its pitfalls, especially in the field of medicine where the adage "you get what you pay for" often has life and death implications.

A Philippine niche

"To say that we are cheap is not the best strategy for medical tourism," Leyco said, explaining that, when it comes to medicine, 'cheap' has negative connotations not normally associated with other aspects of tourism.

He added the country might paint itself into a corner by focusing on "cheap" services like recuperative medicine, similar to how the Philippines positioned itself in the business process outsourcing industry where the country specializes in "low value-added" services like call centers, versus India's wider array of knowledge-based services.

Aware of this problem, the Department of Tourism has sat down with hospitals and medical practitioners to identify the country's so-called "unique selling proposition" vis-a-vis its neighbors which have more experience in drawing in medical tourists.

Singapore is famous for its advanced medical treatments, Thailand is known for affordable cosmetic surgery, with Malaysia, Indonesia and India carving out their own respective niches.

"The hospitals have identified three areas where we're good at: cancer treatment, heart surgery and recuperative services," Tourism Secretary Ace Durano said. "They feel that we are very competitive in these areas."

Whether the country can capitalize on these strengths remains to be seen.

Already, major Metro Manila-based hospitals have plunked down large sums of money to acquire the latest medical equipment, putting them at par with hospitals abroad.

But Leyco warns that only by reforming the entire healthcare system—especially by making it more attractive for medical professionals to work locally—can the country hope for a bigger slice of the medical tourism pie.

In particular, the AIM professor is pushing for a more inclusive medical insurance system that would eventually help raise the wages of doctors and nurses locally.

"We have hospitals like Makati Medical Center and St. Luke's investing P600 million to P800 million to buy the best facilities," he said. "But if our doctors and nurses continue to leave, who will operate them?

"What then will we offer for medical tourism?"

Bearbull

From page B2

development will continue there at a blistering pace.

And the Chinese government is now looking beyond the giant cities being built and is planning to develop the poor rural areas. This will require lots of steel and copper, so I do not think that commodity prices will plummet.

The newsletter already contains daily the indices of the Phisix, Dow, Nasdaq. Nikkei and Hang Seng but now I am adding Shanghai and Shenzhen, as these are the two to watch.

The outlook for the rest of the world remains satisfactory. The United States will probably grow by 2 percent this year, not exciting but good enough for a 1st-world economy.

Next year, growth will probably improve to 2.5 percent, which is probably the maximum possible without inflation. Home sales surged 16 percent in April, the highest since 1993 and durable goods rose 0.6 percent, faster than estimated. There is every sign that the United States will manage a soft landing.

Europe is also growing at about 2.2 percent with unemployment down from double-digits last year to 5 percent and inflation under control. Growth next year will probably pick up. Japan is also out of its long recession, aided by a rate of 0.25 percent and virtually no inflation.

With China, Hong Kong and Europe all importing more from the Philippines, this should make up for any shortfall from the United States.

A 10-percent increase in imports this month bodes well for exports six months down the road. The government needs to sell off its stakes in SMC, MER and power plants to cover the increased pre-election spending on infrastructure, roads, bridges etc.

There is a spate of pending IPOs, AGI, Alternative Fuels Corp. IPVG, MA, Cebu Air, Aboitiz Power, Vista Land and a number of power plants. This will mop up the existing oversupply of liquidity.

In recent weeks, foreign funds have been the sustaining factor behind the market's momentum. I show the net foreign buying and selling not only of the market, but all of the top 50 active shares. This information is very useful.

Also shown in tabular form is the risk factor for every stock in the 50 together with comments. I don't know of anybody else providing such a comprehensive service on a daily basis but it is not for newbies.

The mining sector was fairly quiet this week but Atlas has resumed trading and has just made a disclosure to the PSE that the $100-million loan from Deutsche Bank will be used by Carmen Copper to jumpstart the full rehabilitation of the Carmen mine in Toledo City, Cebu. GEO has held up well despite selling of the rights on Friday.

Activity in mining stocks should pick up ahead of the 7th Asia Pacific mining conference to be held on June 5 to 7 at the Shangri-La, Makati. All the big companies will be there. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

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Idle gov't-owned mining areas to be offered to investors

Transfer of mining permits to DENR corporate arm ordered

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND Natural Resources will offer to prospective investors 68,625 ha of mineral land that were left idle by "previous investors."

Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Angelo T. Reyes signed last week an order transferring the canceled permits covering these mining areas to Philippine Mining Development Corp.

The order covers 65 permits which were canceled by the DENR in 2005 under Memorandum Orders No. 2005-3 and No. 2005-13 due to violations of the Mining Act of 1995, particularly the failure of the holders to undertake mining activities for a long period.

These permits, however, have yet to be turned over by the previous holders to the DENR.

In a statement, Reyes said the transfer of these permits to PMDC would pave the way for the entry into the mining sector of more serious investors who would invest in the development of these areas. Also, he said this would mean higher revenue for the government from these mining assets.

Once the permits are transferred, PMDC would be tasked to dispose of the mining areas through public bidding.

The state-owned firm, however, has the option to develop and operate these assets by itself or through joint venture arrangements with qualified parties.

Reyes, who also chairs PMDC, said the transfer of the permits to a government-owned corporation would allow the government greater flexibility and leverage in developing these mining areas.

REYES

Formerly known as Natural Resources Mining Development Corp., PMDC is the corporate arm of DENR which handles all mining-related activities of the government.

Aside from the 65 permits canceled, another 28 are subject to review.

The cancelation of these permits was ordered by former Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Michael T. Defensor.

This was followed by the declaration of moratorium on the filing of mining applications for the nonperforming mining areas.

Pre-need sector posted ₱5.24B in sales in Q1

SALES OF PRE-NEED FIRMS IN THE FIRST quarter were up by 0.43 percent to P5.24 billion from P5.22 billion in the same period last year.

Data from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) showed that the total number of plans sold in the first quarter fell 16 percent to 54,756 from 65,237 plans sold in 2006.

Sales of life plans grew 40.9 percent to P966 million in the first quarter, from year-ago's P685.6 million. Education plans sold amounted to P1.11 billion, up 1.72 percent from P1.095 billion in the quarter last year.

However, the SEC records showed that sales of pension plans dropped 8 percent to P3.165 billion, from P3.44 billion in the same period in 2006.

For March alone, pre-need sales rose 1.32 percent to P1.7 billion, from year-ago's P1.69 billion. Sales of life plans during the month fell 6.6 percent to P221 million from P236 million in the same period last year.

Education plans climbed 7.3 percent to P408 million in March from P380 million in the same month the previous year. Pension plans also slightly increased by 0.9 percent to P1.08 billion in March, from P1.07 billion in the same period last year. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

6.2% economic growth target for '08 not realistic–Neri

By Doris C. Dumlao

ECONOMIC PLANNING SECRETary Romulo Neri said it would be difficult for the country to achieve a 6.2-percent economic growth next year unless the government would spend P20 billion more for pump-priming activities.

But with the revenue shortfall in the past months and the government's commitment to achieve a balanced budget by next year, Neri said it might not be possible to get the additional funds for pump-priming and thus, it would not be realistic to aim for a higher growth rate next year.

For this year, the economy is expected to grow by 6.1 percent.

"If we didn't have the revenue constraint, it would have been easier to achieve a 6.2-percent growth. For the 0.3 percent (additional growth), you only need about P20 billion in additional spending," he said.

The National Economic Development Authority has proposed during recent meetings of the inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee to set an economic growth target of only 5.9 percent next year.

Neri said the lower GDP growth target for 2008 was questioned by Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, as this would mean a slowdown from the 2007 expansion goal.

Neri said the country could not expect a 2008 growth rate that would be higher than the target for this year because several factors that would bring about this year's growth would not be present next year. These, he said, were the good weather (which followed a year marked by devastating typhoons that resulted in lower farm output), the election spending and "greater leeway in budgetary spending."

"Next year, we won't have the same base effect so it (lower target for 2008) is a purely mathematical phenomenon," Neri said.

"But if we want the 6.2 percent (GDP growth target for 2008) instead of 5.9 percent, the government will have to do something about it. We can't expect the private sector, alone, to give us the additional 0.3-percentage point (growth)," he said.

Neri said it was "theoretically possible" to jack up growth rates, even hit the 7 to 9 percent eyed by Presidential Management Staff chief Joey Salceda for 2007 to 2009, if the government would spend its budget on time.

Nido Petroleum raises $17.9M for RP exploration projects

By Abigail L. Ho

AUSTRALIA-BASED NIDO Petroleum Ltd. has completed the placement of A$21.9 million ($17.9 million) worth of ordinary shares, providing it with more cash to fund its exploration activities in the Philippines.

In a disclosure to the Australian Stock Exchange, Nido managing director David Whitby said the 78.2 million ordinary shares would be issued to investors in Hong Kong, the United Kingdom and Australia.

The transaction was arranged by Merrill Lynch.

"Nido's primary purpose in raising these funds was to take advantage of the growing opportunities afforded by its exploration portfolio in the Philippines," Whitby said.

Using these fresh funds, he said the company would "increase the momentum of its exploration operations by assessing opportunities" in the various service contracts it was holding, including Service Contracts 54, 58 and 63, all located within Northwest Palawan.

Nido planned to expand the scope of its seismic program over SC 58 to acquire detailed coverage of multiple leads found within the area, so that it could increase its drilling options, he said.

Also, the firm would start within the year the detailed planning for exploration, drilling and assessment of availability of long-lead items for SC 54 and 58.

Nido would likewise accelerate its seismic acquisition commitments in SC 63.

"The strong interest from these investors and rapid subscription to the placement is evidence that the market is as eager as Nido is to realize the value of our exploration assets," Whitby said.

He said that apart from activities related to SC 54, 58 and 63, part of the funds would also be used for Nido's development activities and for general working capital.

SC 54, located in offshore Northwest Palawan, covers an area spanning 540,000 ha, while SC 58 covers a 1.3-million-hectare area, also over offshore Northwest Palawan.

SC 63, previously referred to as Area 1 under the Philippine Energy Contracting Round 2 (PECR-2), covers an area spanning 1.056 million hectares and is contiguous with Nido's existing Philippine acreage.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

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Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Mr. Winthrop Z. Gutierrez** starting **May 28, 2007**, from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 1,500.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **June 07, 2007, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department, Ground Floor, Building 5 at the above address, and thereafter, dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Office Wall Clock Time) of June 21, 2007.** Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee II

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ERRATUM

In the Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid of **Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas** published on **May 28, 2007**, the schedule of the **Pre-bid Conference** should be **June 8, 2007, 10:30 a.m.** and not as published.

Our apologies.

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Judge Juan Luna High School Batch '73 Section Rizal will hold a get-together alumni homecoming party on June 2, Saturday at OP-Communications, 4th Floor Saville Bldg., 8728 Paseo De Roxas, Makati City. On the same day, a turnover rites of the bulletin board donated by Batch '73 will be held at Belmonte Bldg., at 8 a.m. Please join us in this memorable occasion. For more details, please contact Chito Celestial - 455-6202, CP 0918-4089611 and Rudy San Gabriel at 0919-4413140.

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In Las Vegas, 'sari-sari' store sets stage for 'pasalubong' center

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EVER CRAVED FOR KARE-KARE BUT YOU are out of atsuete, and getting some might be tricky when your address is in the United States?

The nearest store in the neighborhood is now a click away, as Las Vegas-based Philfortune Media group opened an online *sari-sari* store to cash in on overseas Filipinos' longing for products that are usually available only in the Philippines.

Dubbed Store ng Bayan, the variety store's website features familiar brands such as SkyFlakes crackers, Likas Papaya soap, Eskinol facial lotion, and even copies of the "Pinoy Kamasutra" DVD movie.

A quick browse at www.storengbayan.com suggests that, while the "shelves" promise a supermarket type shopping experience, most are still empty.

Purchases can be in "tingi," as in, you can buy a 108-gram cup of Star Classic margarine at 35 cents or buy a case at $49 for 144 cups.

But hold your horses, Datu Puti toyomansi and Reno liver spread are out of stock for the moment.

Opened last March 31, the Store ng Bayan is meant for the Fil-Am community, the overseas Filipino workers and the rest of the global Filipino community through a user-friendly and highly secure e-commerce storefront, Philfortune said in a statement.

Philfortune is also preparing to launch a special Filipino online store—Pasalubong.com—"which makes sending *balikbayan* box, surprise gifts and food party treats to the Philippines a lot easier and more economical."

The plan is to enable clients, through Pasalubong.com, to send to loved ones cakes, flowers, fruits or lechon as well as food party packages from favorite Filipino fast-food chains and restaurants like Jollibee, Greenwich, Max's and Chowking.

"Sari-sari stores are very much part of the Filipino community," Philfortune said. "These ubiquitous retail stores do not only sell basic commodities but also carry a significant social function in the daily life of Filipinos as often, folks meet here and exchange stories, jokes and opinions."

BIR to run after property tax evaders

By Michelle V. Remo

Revenue agents set to review historical record of land transfers

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE will look into historical records of land transfers to unearth underpaid real property taxes that result in millions of pesos of revenue losses for the government.

Aida Simborio, assistant commissioner for internal revenue, said evasion or under-valuation of real properties resulting in inaccurate tax payments will now be the focus of the BIR's Run After Tax Evaders (RATE) program.

"The BIR is now focusing its RATE program on land transfers because huge revenues are lost from unscrupulous individuals," Simborio said.

"They (BIR personnel) are now digging up past transactions involving land transfers to detect individuals who can be charged with tax-related cases," she added.

Simborio said based on reports received by the BIR, it was common knowledge that many taxpayers underdeclare the value of their property, sometimes in collusion with people from the Registry of Deeds, to avoid paying proper taxes.

"This problem has become rampant—they (land transferees) will present fake documents containing false information about the land so they will pay substantially low real property taxes. Sometimes they do it with the help of someone from the Registry of Deeds," Simborio said.

To have a land title transferred from one name to another, following a sale, the capital gains tax should first be paid to the BIR, which issues the corresponding certificate authorizing registration (CAR).

Some tactics employed to evade payment of proper taxes include falsifying CARs or providing wrong information on valuation of the subject land, she said.

Under the program, the BIR would task its regional offices to investigate land transfers within their jurisdiction. The agency could also assign personnel in Registry of Deeds offices to monitor applications for land transfers and see whether proper taxes are duly paid.

The internal revenue official cited that the BIR's regional office in Cagayan de Oro City recently charged two corporations for using fake documents to avoid paying the correct real property taxes.

A statement from the BIR said a study of an inventory of so-called one-time transactions with a tax base of at least P1 million led to the discovery of tax delinquency involving the sale of 41,507 square meters of land in Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City.

The BIR said there was deliberate misclassification of land to arrive at a lower zonal valuation and non-declaration of building improvements to arrive at lower tax due. Results of the investigations showed that spurious documents were used to make it appear that the subject lot is residential in character, although it is actually commercial, to support payment of lower taxes.

The move of the BIR to go after tax cheats involved in land transfers was one of the measures identified to help it shore up revenue collection and meet its tax collection target of P765 billion for this year.

The BIR is hard pressed to meet its goal to help ensure the government stays on track to achieving the goal of reducing the budget deficit to only P63 billion this year and to post a balanced budget by next year.

In January to April, the BIR collected P218.9 billion in taxes. This means it has to collect at least P154.4 billion in May and June to meet, if not surpass, its P373.3 billion goal for the first semester.

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Carmen Copper secures $100-M loan deal

By Amy R. Remo

CARMEN COPPER CORP., A wholly owned subsidiary of Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp., has signed a $100-million loan facility agreement with Deutsche Bank AG to jumpstart the rehabilitation of the Carmen mine in Toledo City, Cebu.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Carmen Copper said the entire loan would be guaranteed by the Philippine Export-Import Credit Agency.

Carmen Copper expects closing requirements to be completed, and the loan drawn, within 30 days.

Recently, Carmen Copper completed a three-month prerehabilitation program, which included structural repairs on key facilities at the Carmen mine site, such as its copper concentrator plant.

It also purchased new open-pit mining equipment composed of trucks, excavators and bulldozers.

Carmen Copper expects to start production of copper concentrates within 11 months, after the start of the mine's full rehabilitation.

It also expects to build up an average annual production of 47,000 tons of copper in concentrate, 41,000 ounces of gold, 135,000 tons of pyrite concentrate and 419,000 tons of magnetite iron ore concentrate.

The Carmen mine has remaining copper ore resources of 874 million tons, as well as an estimated 1.2 billion tons of ore, previously classified as waste.

From 1955 to 1994, Atlas has mined 667 million tons of copper ore, from which it produced 5.6 million tons of copper, 1.96 million ounces of gold and 7.2 million ounces of silver in high quality concentrate.

The Carmen mine forms part of Atlas' larger mineral property project portfolio covering 48,305 hectares within the country.

Atlas recently started direct nickel ore shipments from its Berong project, which has an estimated resource of 275 million dry tons.

Seven shipments to China have been made to date. It hopes to export a total of 920,000 tons by year end.

Berong is reported to be the fourth largest nickel laterite resource in the world.

Dry spell seen . . .

From page B1

The move has so far allowed the central bank to siphon off as much as P100 billion in excess liquidity, the official added.

Monetary authorities are careful not to let too much cash float in the financial system, for fear of triggering inflationary pressures.

On the other hand, a strong peso helps the BSP in managing inflation by reducing the cost of imports, especially of oil.

"Overall, the inflation environment continues to be favorable," Tetangco said.

In the absence of adverse shocks, emerging forecasts by the BSP indicate that average inflation in 2007 may fall below the 4 to 5 percent target range, while the 2008 inflation may settle at the low end of the projected 3 to 5 percent band.

Going forward, the BSP has vowed to continue watching over risks to the inflation outlook, particularly those coming from a sustained rapid growth in domestic liquidity.

The BSP also plans to bring down the growth in broad money supply, or domestic liquidity, to below 20 percent.

Domestic liquidity, or m3, is the broadest measure of money and is used to estimate the entire supply of money within an economy.

It includes money in circulation, demand deposits, money market funds and short-term repurchase agreements. *With a report from Reuters*

Shares close flat

From page B1

The composite index gave up 1.80 points at 3,443.56, after moving between 3,439.93 and 3,464.40. The broader all-share index fell 3.22 points to 2,209.10.

Losers outnumbered gainers 62 to 58, while 55 stocks were unchanged. A total of 5.1 billion shares worth P3.6 billion ($78.43 million) were traded.

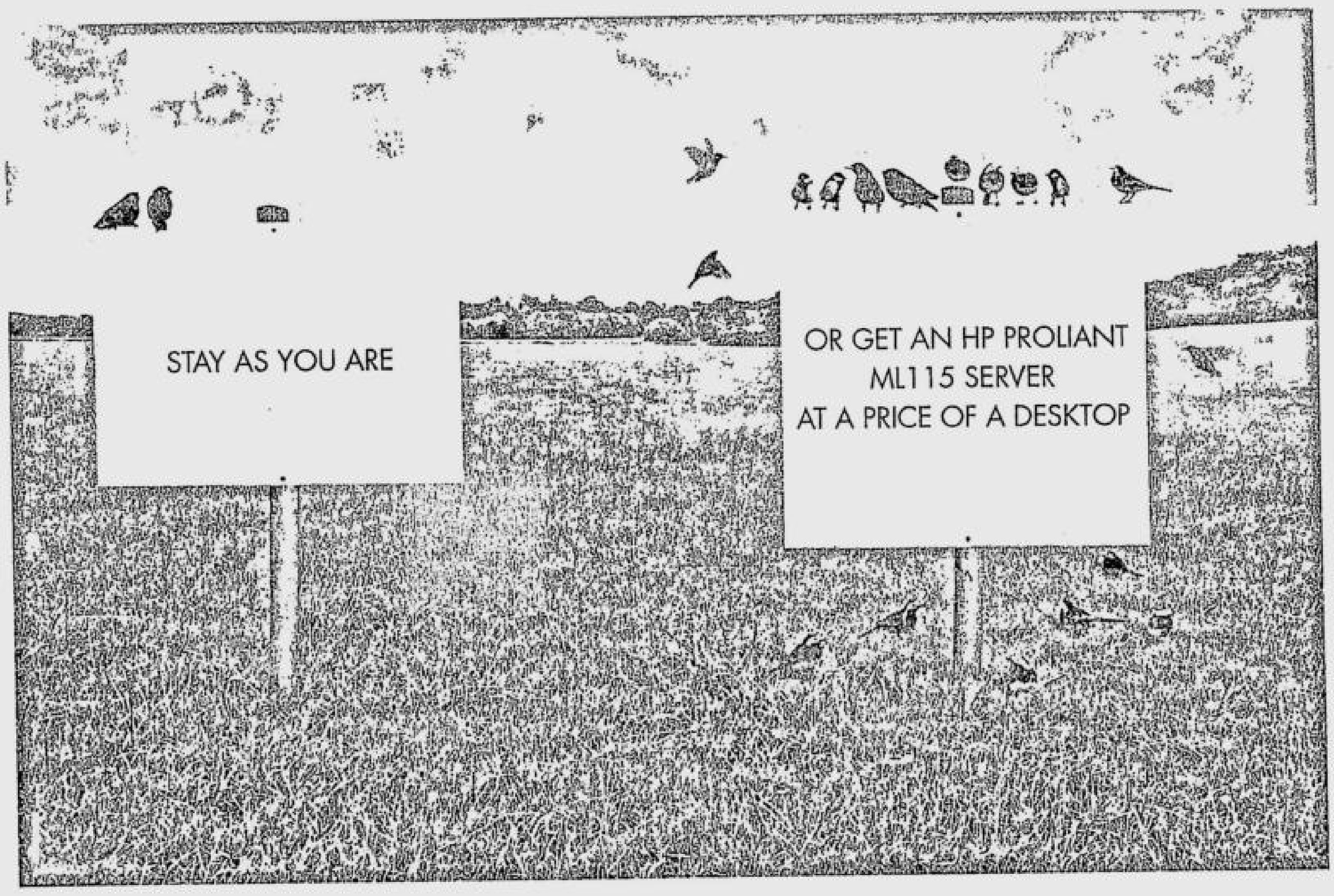
"There are no new major leads out there," said Ron Rodrigo, research head at Unicapital Securities. "The market may continue to consolidate with an upward bias while waiting for new leads, including GDP data on Thursday."

Philippine Long Distance Telephone advanced P50 to P2,555, tracking gains in its American Depositary Receipts on Friday.

Property developer Megaworld Corp., the most actively traded stock, fell 15 centavos to P3.70.

Conglomerate Ayala Corp. rose P5 to P510, but SM Investments Corp. was down P12.50 at P430.

Food and beverage group San Miguel Corp.'s A-shares retreated P1 to P66.50, but its B-shares rose 50 centavos to P77.50. *AFP*



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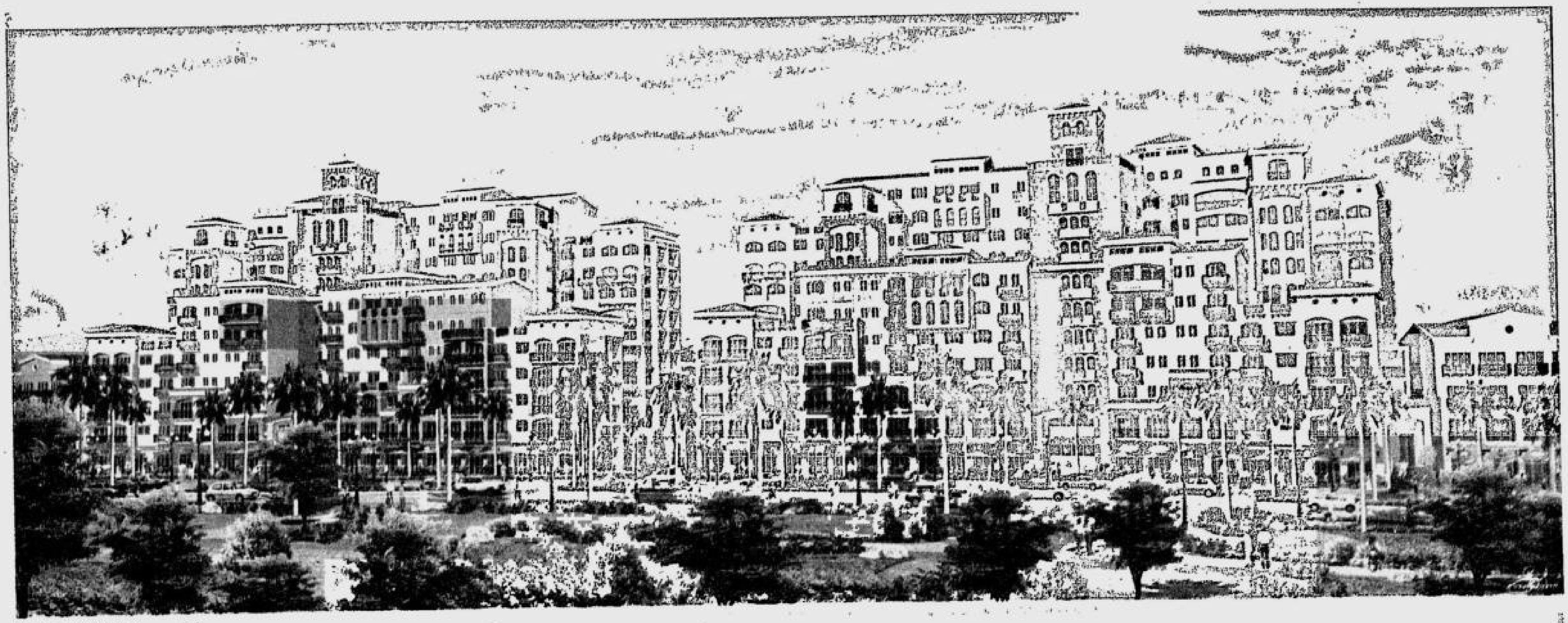

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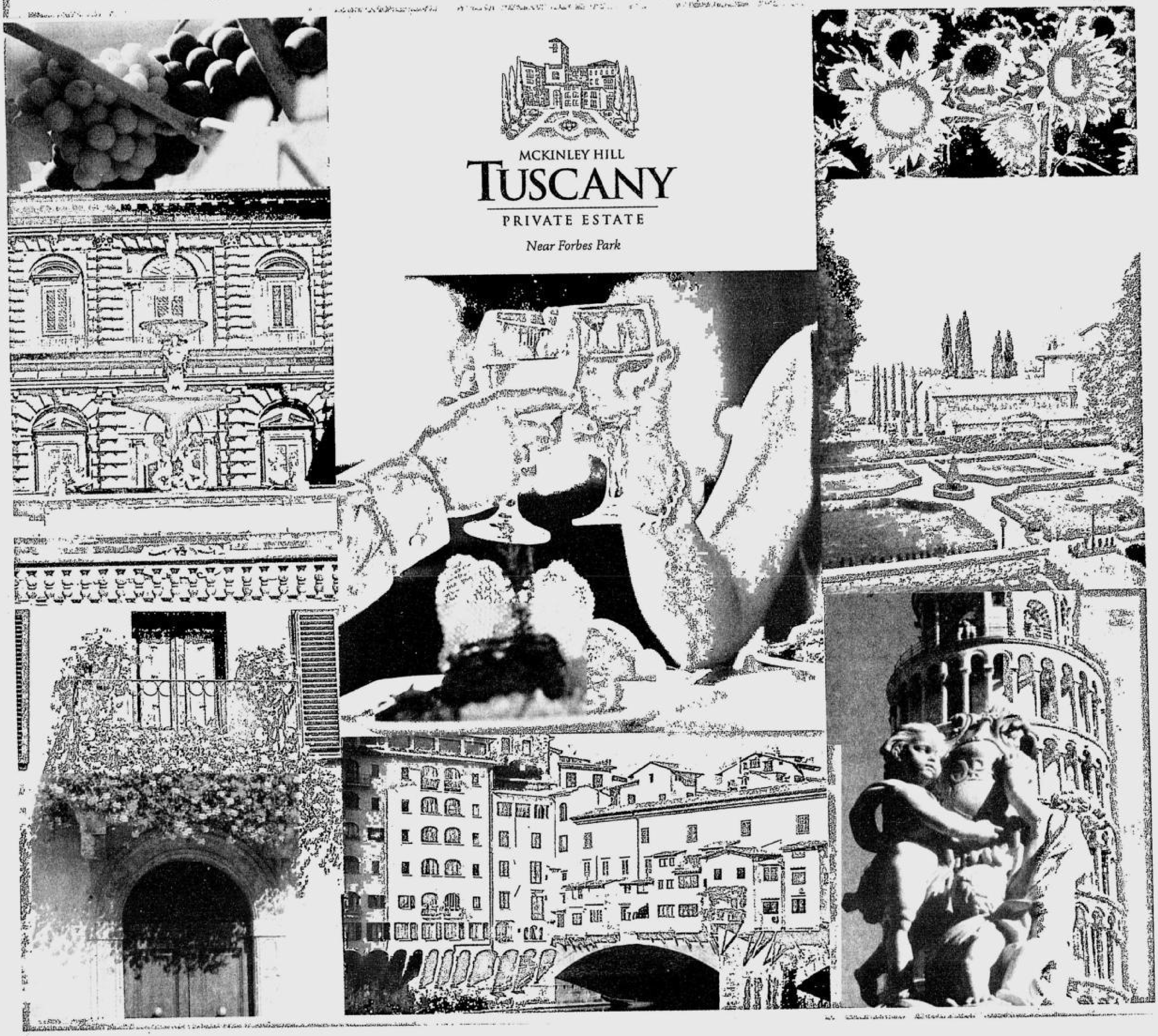

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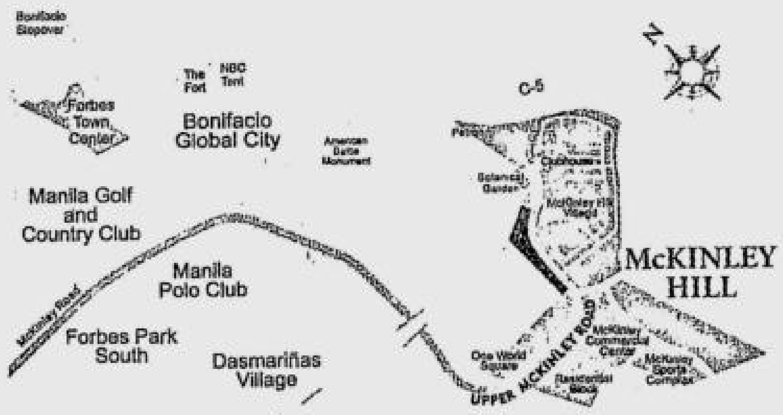
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EILEEN Hortaleza and son Raj

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OPEN FOR FRANCHISING
Chin Chin Gutierrez

Fonterra's breast-feeding advocacy aims to reeducate average Filipino mothers on the virtues and advantages of breast-feeding

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by August de la Cruz

IT'S A REGULAR WORKDAY IN the business district of Eastwood City, Libis, Quezon City.

On the 19th floor, in an imposing tower, men and women in snappy corporate suits scurry about as glass doors swing rhythmically to another working day that neared its end.

Away from the pack, in a private room at the end of the hallway, a young mother, Eileen D. Hortaleza, expresses milk for her first born. The room has a refrigerator humming quietly near the window, a bed by the door, a mini playpen of sorts, and a table with a smattering of literature on the values of breastfeeding.

The swirls of bright pastel colors on the walls and visuals for teaching the alphabet has become Hortaleza's sanctuary since she returned to work a few months earlier.

She visits the room frequently, storing precious food for her tiny bundle of joy named Raj. Hortaleza leaves her desk for 15-20 minutes thrice a day to express milk.

Many companies may shudder at the thought of an employee being "useless" for several minutes during paid work hours. But at Hortaleza's office, nobody, it seems, is complaining—not even her boss.

"I feel so lucky to be a part of such a supportive corporate family," Hortaleza said.

Hortaleza's sanctuary is the Breast-Feeding Room of Fonterra Brands Phils. Inc., one of few private companies in the country that actively support breast-feeding.

For the dairy company that makes Anlene, UCare and, most recently, the premium milk for breast-feeding mothers, Anmum Lacta, it seems the natural thing to do.

Like every woman new to the complexities of motherhood, Hortaleza has adapted to the life of a professional juggler, so to speak, dividing her time as an employee and homemaker.

Parenthood is tough, she said, so she feels blessed to be working in a company that supports her family values.

More productive

"The breast-feeding station [was set up because] we are a dairy company. However, we learned that our working mothers, despite being away from their workplace several times each day, are more productive than ever and are happier in fact," said Carlo M. Mendoza, Fonterra general manager.

Although a novelty in the country, Fonterra has had breast-feeding stations for around eight years. Mendoza said Fonterra hopes other private companies would pick up the idea.

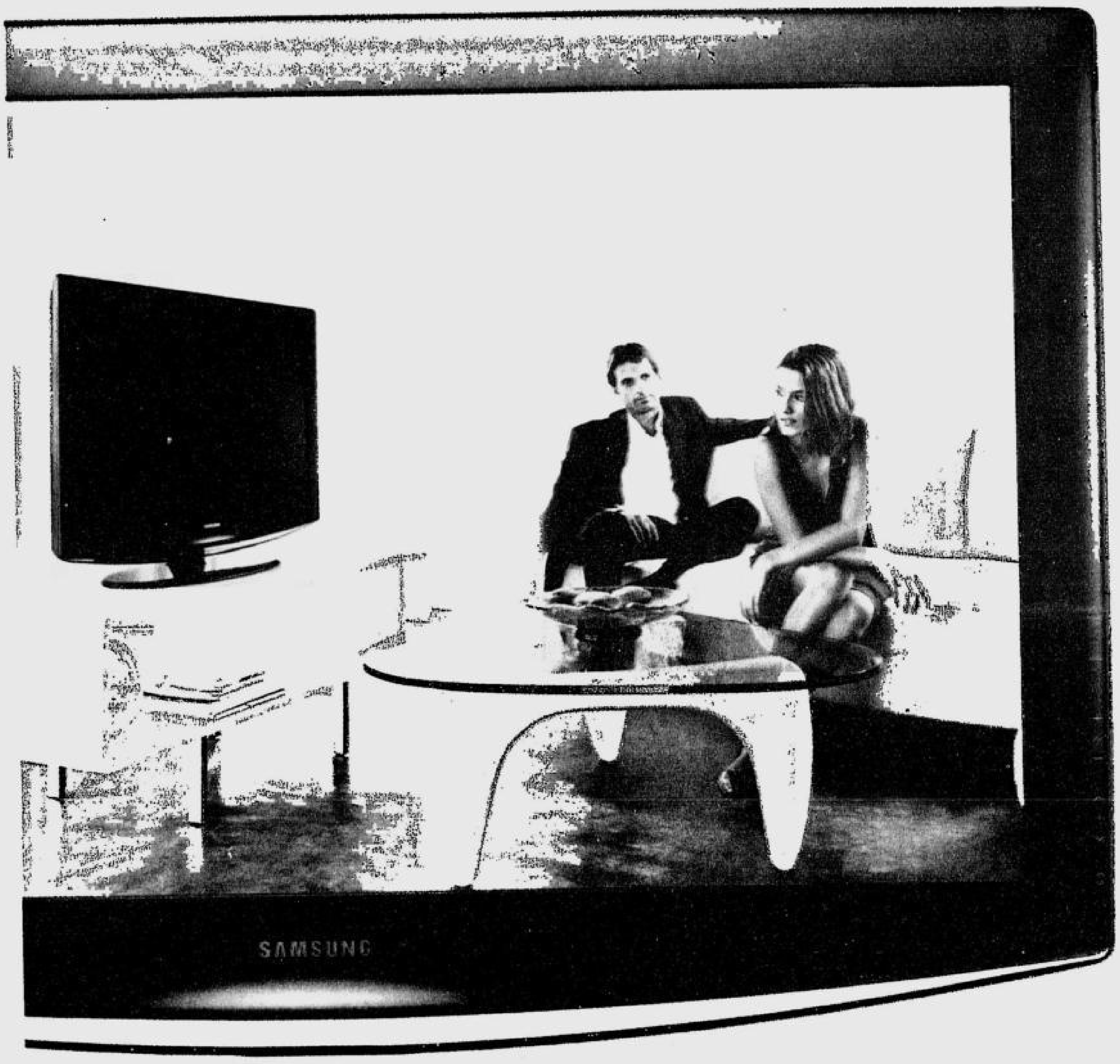
That hope may just be fulfilled soon. Senate Bill 2490, to be known as the Breast-Feeding Act of 2006 and co-authored by Sen. Pia Cayetano, has already been passed by the Senate. It seeks to promote breast-feeding and requires lactation stations in public and workplaces, among others.

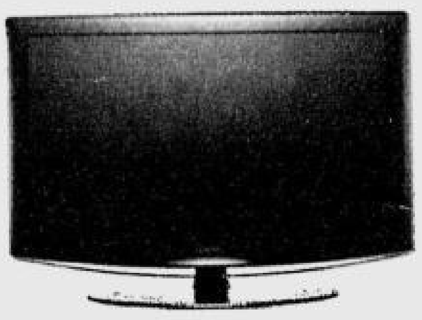
Two years ago, Fonterra launched its breast-feeding advocacy, aiming to reeducate average Filipino mothers on the virtues and advantages of breast-feeding.

To reach a wider audience, the Fonterra team tied up with the Perinatal Association of the Philippines, an organization of health professionals advocating the improvement of maternal, fetal and neonatal health care from preconception through early infancy.

COMPANY/ C3

FONTERRA GM Carlo Mendoza with Anmum Lacta brand manager Moe Calderon and marketing manager Brenda Villamor-Miranda





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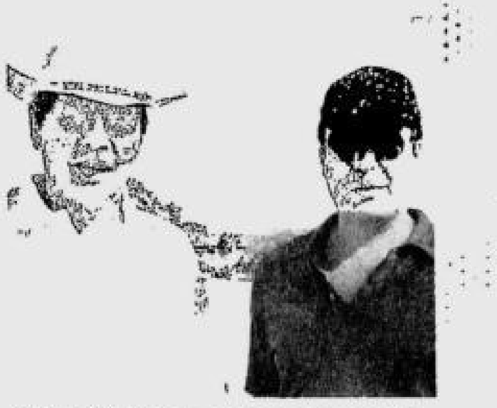
YOUNG hot women polo players Rosanna Yulo and Lorna Lopez

YOUNG polo players Cole and Gus Aguirre

COLORFUL Fila outfits on eyecatching models

POLO watchers: Marta Lovina and Anna Angara

TOMMY Lopez with Deena dela Cruz


GREGGY Araneta and polo player and businessman Iñigo Zobel

FILA'S beautiful first couple: Butch and Cris Albert

CUTIE pie Isabella Albert with her glam grandmother, Wanda Louwallien

ADELEINE Wijangco and the original Celine Lopez

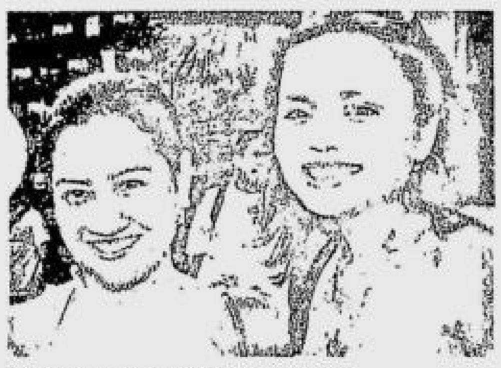
KEEP the sun out: Pinky Amador

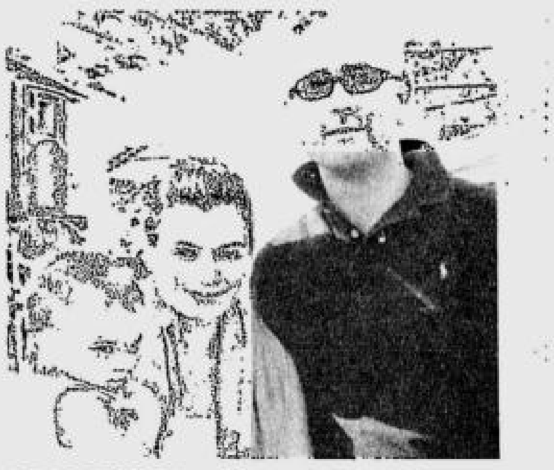
FILA model in a Lucban hat

ANA Bitong

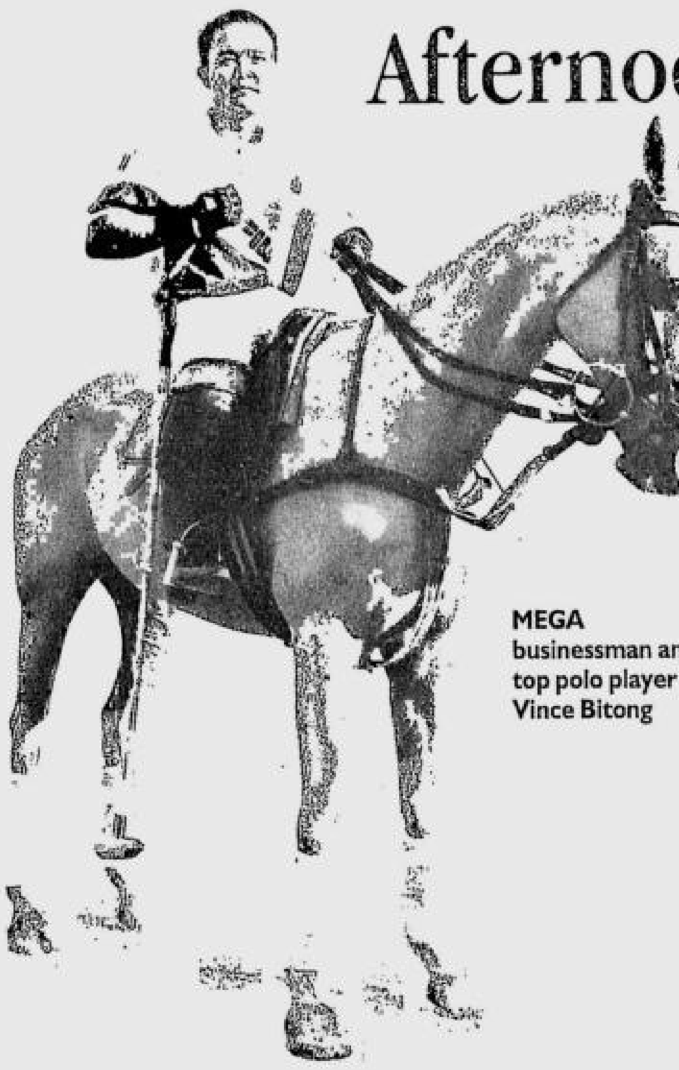
ABSINTH and Boracay Juice bar owner Christine San Diego

COUTURIER Pitoy Moreno


STEPHANIE and Karisia Bitong


ADORABLE Alba with mom Lexi and her husband, Mandarin Hotel's Martini Bar top man Javi Berenguer-Testa

Afternoon tea with the horsy set


MEGA businessman and top polo player Vince Bitong

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

THE HORSY SET'S FAVORITE THE Polo Club, *palanggas*, was filled recently with people in their Sunday fancy dresses and hats, who sipped tea or champagne, as they watched a game of polo.

Fila's popular first lady and woman of style **Cris Albert**, president of Fila Philippines, .no less, made sure tradition and innovation were both served. Neo classical tents were set up with Victorian flower arrangements. A string quartet played.

Afternoon tea was prepared by Bizu. Guests also nibbled on caviar as the bubbly Moët & Chandon overflowed, dahlings.

The beautiful and not so beautiful showed up to immerse themselves in the wonderful game of polo.

After saying my "hellos," I watched with excitement today's hotshot polo players.

In-between the game, *moi* did my people-spotting. It was clear the women, with their Lucban hats, were the eyecatchers of the afternoon, *palanggas*, like **Wanda Louwallien**, the original **Celine Lopez**, and **Ana Bitong**.

Other polo watchers were **Irene** and **Greggy Araneta, Greg Yang, Bombit** and **Deena Garcia-de la Cruz, Carol Masibay**, gorgeous **Marilen Elizalde, Freddy Borromeo**, stylish **Nini Licaros, Mike** and **Mariles Garcia, Lexi** and **Javi Testa**, gorgeous **Bianca Zobel** and **Anna Angara**.

And, like most Fila hot events, all proceeds went to **Butch Albert**'s sport ministries, specially Bright Lights that arranges fostering and adoption of children.

Apres the hot game, Porsche and Audi cars rolled in with gorgeous models sporting Dior faces and the latest Fila Fiore collection, *natch*.

That glorious Sunday was capped with dinner right on the field and an awesome display of fireworks, dahlings.

Winning event

Palanggas, I have said it before, and I say it again. When my favorite guru of good gets involved in an event, whether cultural or social, it is a happening to remember.

That is true of the recent literary and artistic event, the launch of star man **George Sison's** new book, "Feng Shui of the Mind. I Am a Winner." It coincided with talented Ernie Garcia's third one-man art exhibit, "Women in/on Fiberglass."

As expected, it was an overwhelming success, dahlings.

George, we all know, is definitely the personality for all seasons while **Ernie** is an accomplished architect, actor-singer turned painter, *palanggas*.

George had tons, and I mean tons, of mega namedroppables as guests from boutique magnate **Nedy Tantoco** to art patron **Marivic Vasquez** and GMA-7 CEO and president **Felipe "Henry" Gozon**, plus so many others too glam and well-known to mention, dahlings.

Seated beside *moi* was the legendary **Loida Nicolas Lewis** of the Beatrice billions, *palanggas*, who maintains such a low social profile that I was so surprised and, *naturellement*, pleased to see her. She whispered that she flew in just for her dear pal George. "I have known him since our UP days, when I was studying to be a lawyer."

And right behind me was high priestess of poetry **Virgie Moreno**, no less.

Moi will remember for eons how George S. concluded his brief thank you speech: "You can give without loving but you can never love without giving."

The applause was thunderous, as everyone felt wonderful about life and themselves.

George signed a thousand books, Ernie happily sold his artworks, and everyone partied on and on and on, until the stars disappeared from the sky, *palanggas*.

Privileged

When **Mila Magsaysay Valenzuela** invited me to attend the fab "vacation ownership program," without batting an eyelash *moi* dashed over to be part of the launching of the Mount Malarayat Privilege Circle, dahlings.

The elegant Continental Room of the chic Tower Club in Philam Life Tower was packed with heavyweights in business and society, *natch*.

Hotshot architect **Antonio "Toti" Turalba Jr.**, the Active Group of Companies' young and dynamic president, welcomed us and gave a short talk on the exceptional facilities at the Mount Malarayat Golf and Country Club and the Suites at Mount Malarayat, "guaranteed to make vacations more exciting and memorable."

Vicki de Leon, sales director, told us about the exciting services and benefits exclusive to Mount Malarayat Privilege Circle members, like staying at The Suites for consecutive seven days and seven nights each year, classy Golf & Country Club facilities, plus so many more, dahlings.

Also welcoming us were The Active Group's chair, mega architect **Antonio Turalba Sr.**; and vice-chair, architect **Cristina Turalba**, who circulated among the invitees way past the cocktail hour while sultry stage actress **Pinky Amador** sang smooth bossa nova numbers, *palanggas*.

New find

Hey, it was fun, fun, fun during the opening of the new branch of The Great Finds Fair, metro's newest department store chain. The afternoon, with the all-American motif of red, white and blue, featured tons of yummy comfort food, games, magic tricks and juggling acts, enjoyed by all the kids, including kids at heart, *palanggas*.

Finds is a brainchild of the Villar siblings—young and eligible businessman **Mark** and eyecatching sister **Camille**, store operations and marketing and merchandising managers, respectively. The branch is at the second level of Starmall Las Piñas.

"Finds offers a fresh take on retailing, with uncluttered, well-lit and tastefully appointed selling area, making it a breeze to browse around and get those sought-after 'exceptional find,' said cyber smart Mark V.

Finds' fantastic in-house brand TPF, for "The Perfect Find," is inspired by hot trends from all over the world and the pages of fashion magazines. The clothes, with quality and genuine style, are also easy on the wallet, dahlings.

Other brands include Bench, Sabrina, Alternative Lifestyles, Freego, Dickies, Little Tikes, BNY, Crissa, Page, and Hello Dolly, *palanggas*.

You can also pamper your pooches with chic clothes, glamorous collars and comfortable doggie beds by Pooch Couture, no less.

Visit Finds Superstore and find out, *palanggas*, why it's so cool to shop here. Finds is also at the ground floor of Starmall on Shaw Blvd. corner Edsa.

BEAUTIES and tycoons: Binky Ocaya with hotshot Antonio "Toti" Turalba, Jr., Active Group president; Menchie Matthieu and Harry Mosquera, Active Group marketing director

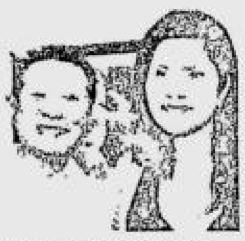
CHARLES Lim, consultant, Corporate Communications, Cebu Pacific; and TV's David Celdran

REP. Cynthia Villar with Jip Remulla, Dr. Aivee Aguilar Teo, Zee Teo, Dr. Pet Bravo, Dr. Lulu Bravo and Senate President Manny Villar

FORMALLY opening the second Great Finds Fair store: Camille Villar with Sam Concepcion, Jennylyn Mercado, Patrick Garcia and Mark Villar

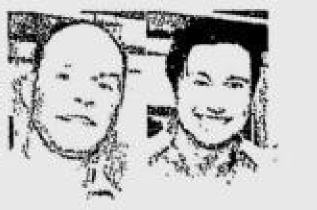
JUAN Rodrigo with the artist Ernie Garcia, Becky Garcia and her husband, international businessman George Sarakinis

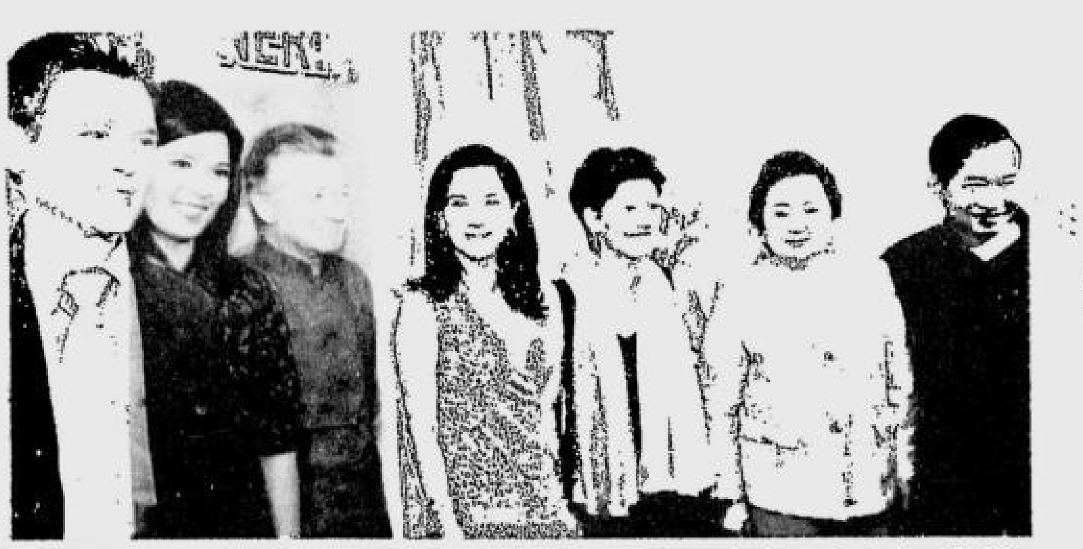
INTERNATIONAL photographer Rupert Jacinto and wife Tina Hidalgo


BULGARI'S Mario Katigbak and businesswoman Fe Dixon

LOIDA Nicolas Lewis

DJ Lopez


BUSINESSMAN Chris Goetemann and lawyer Cyril Means


GUESTS of honor: Author George Sison with Lani Mercado, Italian Ambassador Rubens Fedele, Marivic Vazquez, Signora Cosseta Fedele, Nedy Tantoco and architect Gerry Contreras

INNER AWARENESS
Jaime Licauco

Healers learn from spirits

A YOUNG GIRL, ABOUT 8 OR 10 years old, was seriously ill.

Lying in her bed, she dreamt that a Capuchin monk appeared to her and touched her forehead. Next morning, she was completely healed.

When the child told her parents and other people that a good monk, who appeared in her dream, healed her, they did not believe her. Then they saw a tiny drop of red blood on the child's white blanket.

The blood was found to be of different type from the child's. When Padre Pio's picture was shown to her, she identified him as the one she saw in her dream.

Padre Pio, as we know, suffered from stigmata or spontaneous bleeding in both hands and feet in imitation of the passion of Jesus Christ.

This is an example of healing done by the spirit, although at that time, Padre Pio was still alive. His astral body must have flown to the sick bed of the child and healed her while his physical body was in his monastery.

He was known to do that during his time, and now that he is dead, he continues to heal people while in the spirit world.

The Christian Bible contains many stories of healing by angelic creatures. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ healed many, although he was not physically with the patients.

While we usually do not doubt stories from the Bible, we have difficulty accepting similar stories of healing from the spirit world when it happens to us today in real life.

We usually attribute such incidents to imagination, hallucination or spontaneous remission of illness. In other words, the disease would have healed by itself.

Verifiable stories

Spirit communication and spirit healing continue up to this day and did not stop with the death of Christ, as some evangelists seem to believe. And there are many verifiable and authenticated stories that these are still happening in modern times.

How do our local *herbolarios* or indigenous medicine men and women know which of the so many different medical plants and herbs are good for what disease?

According to conventional wisdom, this knowledge was handed down from one generation to another. If this were so, then these healers must have prodigious vocabulary and perfect memory to be able to remember all the different plants useful or effective against certain disease.

But many local healers are unschooled and do not have sophisticated intellects. Yet they can put to shame those with doctorate degrees in big universities.

So how can we explain how the first healers learned about medicinal plants?

Incredible as this may sound, I believe that the first healers obtained their knowledge direct from the spirit world through a dream, in a trance state or a waking vision.

In the '80s, I met a teenage female healer in the Mountain Province. She lived in a small hut with her parents. Although quite young, she was known in the village as a good healer and everybody brought their sick to her.

At the time of my visit, a mother had brought her baby for treatment. The baby's back was accidentally scalded by boiling water. She was crying hysterically in pain.

No to doctors

Wanting to help, I offered to bring the baby to the hospital and even to shoulder the expenses. The mother simply looked at me and said sternly: "We don't believe in hospital doctors."

That shut me up and I just watched what the healer did.

She burned some herbs and then poured the ashes on the burned back of the child. I was shocked because the baby could suffer from infection. But I couldn't do anything.

There are many verifiable stories of healing by unseen powers

As the healer slowly covered the burned portions of the baby's back with ashes, the child stopped crying. I found that pretty impressive. I did not think she could make the child stop crying.

I asked her later how she knew exactly what to do. How did she know which plant was good for which disease? Who taught her how to do this thing?

She replied that no one taught her how to heal. She was told in a dream what plant was good for which ailment. She was even told exactly where in the mountain she could find a particular medicinal plant and which part of the plant to use, for example, the leaves, the bark, the root.

This story is typical of the many healers I have interviewed in the Philippines. Not one of them chose willingly or volunteered to be a healer.

They were somehow chosen by the spirits to become one. They all spoke of an invisible guide that appeared to them in a dream, direct vision, or during a trance or meditative state.

As the Japanese psychic and spiritual researcher Dr. Hiroshi Motoyama said: "No one becomes a healer unless he has encountered a god." I believe he is absolutely right!

Note: For inquiries on books, paranormal services and seminars on Inner Mind Development, ESP and Intuition Development, and Soulmates, Karma and Reincarnation conducted by this writer, call 8107245 or 8926806; fax 8159890; e-mail innerawareness_2005@yahoo.com.ph.

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GETTING FIT HAS BECOME EASIER. You can choose your favorite sport and do it right inside your home.

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XaviX lets you lose weight and burn calories with an electronic interactive gadget. Choose your favorite sport:

XaviXAerostep comes with a wireless J-Mat. Run, jump and dodge obstacles on the streets of Hong Kong or make the right moves by following Chan's lead in various cardio workouts.

It is like being in his gym. The XaviXAerostep system also keeps track and records your workout and calories burned.

XaviXPowerBoxing or the Jackie Chan Studio Fitness Powerboxing uses wireless boxing gloves to test endurance, speed and reflexes. Users can block, weave and punch their way through five challengers to win the championship belt or practice in training mode to stay in shape. It tracks calories burned and workout times for multiple users.

INTERNATIONAL action star Jackie Chan introduces XaviX, the latest interactive and fun way to fitness.

XaviXTennis allows you to play tennis like you are on the court. Swing the wireless racquet and the technology senses the angle and speed of your movements and translates your action onto the TV screen. Challenge yourself in tournament mode, practice your serve, finish or rally.

Take on the system or compete against a friend in split-screen two-player mode. It includes two tennis racquets and system cartridge. XaviX-Tennis offers realistic high-definition graphics and stereo sound effects and a choice of grass, clay or hard courts.

XaviXBowling allows users to bowl full 10 frames, race against the clock or try to hit the moving pins in other fun competitions.

Challenge up to three friends or take on the system. You control the amount of hook on each ball and can select ball colors and character profiles.

XaviXGolf is perfect for practicing your swing. It features a multitude of game modes and multi-player options allowing you to play with family and friends.

XaviX is available at Electronics Boutique branches at Alabang Town Center (tel. 7723251/3250); Park Square 1 (8164423/2440); Festival Supermall (8428221 or 8099100); Robinsons Galleria (6365077/0206); Market! Market! (8867939/7949) and Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall (6815424/5453) and in all SM Appliance Center.

Your Doctor Knows Best

Felicitas I. Artiaga-Soriano, MD, FPPA

Question:
My friend was diagnosed to have schizophrenia. What is it? How can I help her?

Doctor Says...
(continuation from last week's column)

Schizophrenia is marked by the presence of psychotic also known as "positive" symptoms or "negative" symptoms. Positive symptoms include delusions (bizarre thoughts that have no basis in reality); hallucinations (hearing voices, seeing nonexistent things, and experiencing sensations, such as burning, that have no source); and disordered thinking (apparent from a person's fragmented, disconnected and sometimes nonsensical speech). On the other hand, negative symptoms include social withdrawal, extreme apathy, diminished motivation, and blunted emotional expression. Deterioration is usually observed in:

- Work or academic activities
- Relationships with others
- Personal care and hygiene

Treatment: People who have schizophrenia often require medication to control the most troubling symptoms. Antipsychotic medications help bring biochemical imbalances closer to normal. The newer drugs may also be effective for symptoms such as social withdrawal, extreme apathy, and blunted emotional expression.

Recovery: After these symptoms are controlled, psychotherapy and self-help groups can assist people who have schizophrenia learn to develop social skills, cope with stress, identify early warning signs of relapse, and prolong periods of remission. In addition, support groups and family therapy can give loved ones a better understanding of the illness and help them provide the compassion and support that play an important role in recovery. The good news is that many of those who have schizophrenia can work, live in the community or with their families, and enjoy being with friends if they receive continuous, appropriate treatment. According to The National Alliance on Mental Illness, treatment of schizophrenia is successful in 60 percent of patients.

People with schizophrenia will value your friendship. They are often discriminated by those who are ignorant about the illness. Many people with schizophrenia have high IQ's. Unless someone is experiencing symptoms of their illness, there will be nothing especially unusual about their behavior.

If you think someone has symptoms of schizophrenia, he/she should talk to a doctor who has experience treating the illness. This is very important because early diagnosis and treatment means a better long-term prognosis.

Dr. Soriano is a Psychiatrist. She is an active consultant at the UERMM Medical Center and Veterans Memorial Medical Center. She holds clinics at the UERMM Medical Center. Dr. Soriano is an Assistant Professor of the University of the East, College of Medicine.

This column is supported by AstraZeneca Philippines as part of its disease awareness campaign. This is not intended to replace the advice of a healthcare professional. Always consult your doctor.

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Band of Mercy becomes ACPA partner

THE PHILIPPINE BAND OF MERCY (PBM), which helps indigent Filipinos with cleft lip/palate and diseases like cataract and glaucoma, has been accepted as international partner of The American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association (ACPA).

ACPA is an international nonprofit medical society of healthcare professionals who treat and/or perform research on birth defects of the head and face.

As an ACPA member, PBM can access facilities and grants from the association for the continuing education of its medical professionals.

PBM is also given access to clinical and scientific information on cleft and craniofacial anomalies.

PBM is at 22 East Avenue, Diliman, QC. Call 4337260 or 9288539; visit www.philbandofmercy.org.

Sleep well on clean, sanitary mattress

QUALITY SLEEP IS IMPORTANT FOR health and well-being.

Often, getting a good night's sleep is simply a matter of having a comfortable bed and mattress.

But the bed is one of the most neglected pieces of furniture. Little attention is also given to the mattress that can harbor allergy-causing substances like dust, dander and dust mites; or be a breeding ground for disease carriers.

Fibrefill Manufacturing Inc. has developed Select Comfort mattress protection. Available in SM Department Stores, it is made of high-grade polyester waterproof fabric, with 100-percent polyester filler for absorption, and is hypoallergenic.

The Select Comfort mattress protection comes in single, double, queen and king sizes. It has adjustable straps to make it easy to put it on the mattress and remove it for cleaning and is machine-washable. Fibrefill Manufacturing Inc. also makes pillows, industrial filters, carpets for cars, padding for insulation and stuffing fibers.

Company gives women employees...

From page C1

Heading the Fonterra team are Anmum Lacta brand manager Moe Calderon and marketing manager Brenda Villamor-Miranda. The advocacy group aims to hold several symposiums on breast-feeding each year. Last year, the team conducted 28 symposiums in different key cities attended by more than 700 doctors.

"We need to change habits here. There are myths and facts we need to clear up. Of course, we cannot dismiss the role poverty has among those misinformed," said Villamor-Miranda.

Villamor-Miranda said one of the facts about breast-feeding that should be emphasized, particularly among the weight-conscious, is how it actually helps speed up the loss of pregnancy weight.

Weight loss

Hortaleza, for instance, said she dropped 33 pounds after four months of breast-feeding. Not only does she feel good, she said, but she also bonded with Raj in ways she never thought possible. Raj can tell his mother's touch apart from his grandmother's, preferring to be fed in the arms of his mother.

Calderon also said part of the team's aim is to help doctors educate their patients. Networking is the key, Calderon said, so Fonterra distributes thousands of pamphlets advocating breast-feeding.

The pamphlets—with information on maternal nutrition, expression of milk and storage, latching techniques, breast care, etc.—are currently in English. A Filipino version would be out soon, Calderon said.

The rewards for breast-feeding are immeasurable, said Villamor-Miranda. Studies indicated breast-fed children had higher cognitive IQ test results, greater resistance to infections, reduced risk of chronic diseases and an enhanced immune system.

Breastfeeding mothers reduced their risk of postpartum—after delivery—bleeding, weight gain and obesity, breast and ovarian cancer, osteoporosis and lactational infertility.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph

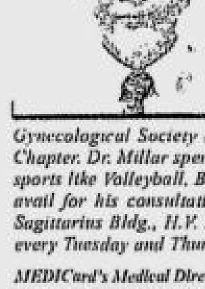
MEDICard The Healthcare I Deserve

Take Charge Doc!

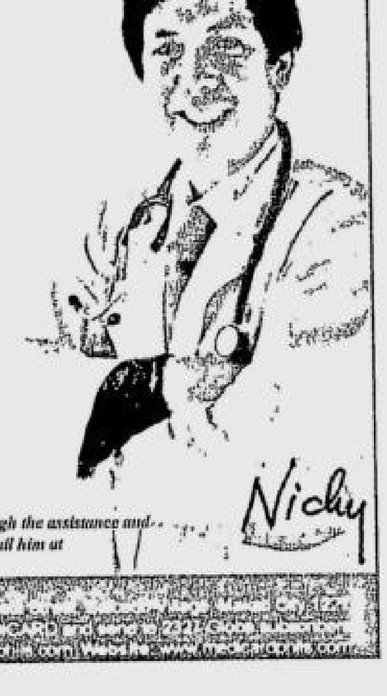
What are the surgical methods for family planning?

The surgical methods of family planning are minor operative procedures for permanently terminating fertility (sterilization) in men and women. Voluntary surgical sterilization is the most popular contraceptive method globally, seen in 170 million females and 43 million males worldwide. In Females, surgical sterilization is also known as BTL (Bilateral Tubal Ligation). It can be done by a variety of techniques, simplest of which is the Pomeroy Technique. Through a small abdominal incision, the fallopian tubes are identified and a segment from each tube are ligated, cut and removed. This results to inability of the sperms to reach the ovum (egg), thus fertilization is prevented. In males, the surgical sterilization procedure is called vasectomy. Through a small incision in the scrotum, the vas deferens (ejaculatory duct) is identified and a segment of it is cut and the ends are sealed. This blocks the passage of sperm from the testes to the seminal vessel thus rendering the seminal fluid ejaculate free sperms. This procedure is usually completed within 20-30 minutes under local anesthesia. Reversal of BTL and vasectomy may be possible but technically difficult, expensive and not always successful. Contrary to some myths, BTL and vasectomy do not affect sexual ability, performance or libido since the testes and the ovaries are left untouched.

Ref: William's Obstetrics 24th edition and The Essentials of Contraceptive Technology, 2003 edition.



Dr. Fabian Doloroso Millar III provides us with this week's discussion on The Surgical methods for family planning. Dr. Millar, a medicine graduate of University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center, took his residency training for Obstetrics & Gynecology in Manila Doctors Hospital, Philippine He is an active member of the Philippine Obstetrical & Gynecological Society and the Manila Medical Society 4th district Chapter. Dr. Millar spends his free time watching movies and playing sports like Volleyball, Bowling and Tennis. MEDICard members may avail for his consultations in our Head Office Clinic in 9th floor Sagittarius Bldg., H.V. Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City every Tuesday and Thursday 1-5pm.



Nicky

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

Wellness tidbits to remember

EVERY NOW AND then it is good to have reminders. Little bits and pieces of information that can help us along the path to a more energetic life.

The operative word is energy. There is much to know about our own bodies, how it functions and what can be done to get maximum efficiency or output from it.

Chew on these

That's right. Our body is like a machine, a car. Whether you prefer a rusty old truck to a sleek, fast Porsche is your choice.

- **Less is more.** It is better to eat less than more. This also applies to fashion and cosmetics.

Studies made on the elderly have revealed a startling fact. Practicing denial can help the body function better. For example, excessive eating (beyond the point of feeling full at mealtime) will definitely lead to digestive/gastric problems, as well as overload the kidney and liver.

So don't be surprised if the doctor says you are a borderline diabetic or hypertensive. Or your cholesterol is high. Heed the warnings now. Moreover, eating less can lead to a longer life expectancy.

Question is, what do you eat less of and more of?

Simply put the more natural/raw, fresh food you eat, the better for your body. In short, vegetables and fruits as well as multigrain or whole-grain carbohydrates.

The less animal fat and processed food you take would also ease the burden on your body. These foods put a heavy toll on the system as they are laced with fat, chemicals/antibiotics, preservatives/seasoning/coloring and metals that leach out of the can and into the processed food.

Your body does not recognize these as friendly or useful, thus, while your tummy may feel full or satisfied after eating, you are simply feeding the stomach but actually starving the cells of nutrients.

- **Move or deteriorate.** A malady is upon modern man/woman due to a fast-paced world. It's called earning a living.

Most people would put their health on the line just to meet deadlines, achieve targets and secure their material goals in life. And while working does indeed look like you are moving, it's the kind of movement that does not lead to improved health. On the contrary, less exercise equals less energy.

Yes, it's true. You may burn energy while exercising, thus the feeling of tiredness. But it's the kind of tiredness that strengthens the body and makes it run more efficiently, particularly the cardiovascular, muscular and skeletal systems.

Exercise can help prevent heart problems, hypertension, diabetes, osteoporosis, anxiety/depression, etc. So exercise, no matter what reasons you may have for not doing so like not having the time, the popular excuse. Start with three times a week as a regular regimen.

- **Don't worry.** Smile! All neurologists and psychotherapists in the world agree—if you are continuously in a sour mood, your body will also turn sour. It has to do with the triggers that release acid to the body.

When you focus on a problem, then your mental state is engaged. No problem here. It is only when your thinking is involved with a feeling that a reaction is produced in the body.

If simple problem-solving is happening, this becomes a mental exercise. But when the thought merges with emotion, it generates a response from the body. A loving thought releases feel-good hormones, a painful thought releases feel-bad hormones.

The result—a stressful response to a situation. Note: Stress is only stressful if you stress yourself over a situation. In short, keep calm. A calm state of mind and heart can spell the difference between health and illness and even sanity and madness.

Spiderman wisdom

Inspired by a line or two from "Spiderman 3": "Whatever the situation may be in your life, the decision is yours to make. The choice is yours. In the end, it's the choices we make that clearly define who we are."

So, what's your choice?

Love and light!

Listen to or watch "Ma Beauty Po Naman," on dzMM Teleradyo, 11 a.m., Radyo Patrol 630 or ABS-CBN Channel 22, Sky Cable. Watch "The Good Life" on Studio 23, 10-11 a.m.

Avoiding weight-loss traps

By Mitch Felipe
Contributor

WHEN PEOPLE ARE FACED WITH HIGH-risk situations, they can fall into weight-loss traps. Stress and emotional upheavals can lead to overeating, lack of physical activity or both.

Some people can return to their old, unhealthy habits, and self-control is severely lessened and weight-loss goals are forgotten.

But you can do something to prevent weight gain even when faced with these risky situations. Proper eating and physical activity management are always part of the solution.

Vacations and holidays

These are the toughest situations you can encounter while trying to lose weight because of the constant availability of food and the realization that you are supposed to "rest and relax."

To avoid undoing your efforts, plan how you are going to spend your vacation, including your meals. Make healthier food alternatives available (fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk, lean meats, whole-grain carbs) and let your companions know how they can support you during the long break.

Walk at least one hour a day as a calorie-burning activity. Do body-weight exercises like crunches, push-ups, squats or lunges, or simply climb up and down stairs as a continuation of your resistance-training exercise if you are unable to visit the gym.

Special occasions

Many traditional Filipino dishes served during birthdays, anniversaries, graduation, wedding, etc., like *lechon*, *crispy pata* and *kare-kare* are high in fat and sodium.

Strategies to control overeating include portion control ("just a taste, just a bite"), removal of visible fats and skin, and choosing only your favorite dishes.

Maximize your exercise plan for the week to ensure you can use up a considerable amount of calories before the event.

Gift-giving and entertaining

Cultural practices such as gift-giving (bringing *pasalubong* like native sweets and chips) contribute to excessive eating. Additionally, extended visits by relatives or close friends contribute to a high-risk situation as you often make high-calorie food in large quantities readily available for them.

So before your guests arrive, plan what you will serve your guests. Think healthy but tasty. Avoid junk foods, alcoholic beverages and sweets.

Walking around the house, using the stairs and doing household chores can help burn calories even if you stay at home the whole day.

Offer your relatives/friends free gym guest-passes and bring them with you during your regular workout so your exercise routine will not be disrupted. You may also play your favorite sport with them, or spend more time walking and shopping.

Office or business meetings

High-fat or high-sugar snacks are usually served during meetings. They may include *ensaymada*, donuts and various pastries.

Sometimes you don't have any choice but to eat what is available to avoid long, tedious discussions and it could be way past your mealtime.

Opt for a pre-meeting snack like a sandwich or a fruit so you can concentrate on the agenda rather than graze on available treats. You can also offer to choose the snacks or meals that will be served. This will help you meet your healthy eating goals.

Extended hours of work can cause stress, drain you mentally and deprive you of energy needed for you to exercise afterwards. Plan your workout in advance or try to exercise in the morning.

You can also try to walk at least 30 minutes after work by doing your groceries or just walking your dog an hour after dinner.

Weekend family gatherings

Spending time with the family over lunch or dinner on a Sunday is part of our tradition. Hearty meals are usually served for this once-a-week family bonding.

Eat a light snack like fruits, whole-wheat crackers or bread before the anticipated big meals. Drink plenty of water before and during the event.

Sports like jogging, cycling, swimming or badminton are perfect for a Sunday morning. A physical activity before an eating event could strengthen your control and help you limit the quantity of your food intake and make wise food choices.

Peer pressure and night-outs

Friday and Saturday evenings are the most awaited time of the week after five to six days of work. But alcohol and fatty foods might make you disregard your weight-loss goals.

Before your weekend activities, take a satisfying dinner. Try to exercise restrain when your peers encourage you to eat and drink more.

Visit the gym on a Friday morning or before going out to remind you of your fitness goals. This will prevent you from overeating at dinnertime. In the end, successful weight management can be achieved through planning and the adoption of realistic goals.

Spa relies on cell network for smooth operation

BIOESSENCE, THE SKINCARE, SPA AND slimming treatment center Dr. Emma Guerrero heads, has become one of the industry leaders since it first opened in Davao City in 1994. Other than the rapid expansion in the center's bed capacity, Bioessence is now a thriving enterprise with 32 branches.

However, managing all these outlets is a big challenge for Dr. Guerrero. To keep on top of nationwide operations, she relies on Sun Cellular. "We switched to Sun because of the unbelievably affordable rates, she explains. You don't have to pay per call. Sun's 24/7 Call and Text Unlimited service is really amazing. We used to fax daily sales reports, but now, we just pay minimum regular rates and send it through text," she says. "And meetings with my staff are also set through text messages, making coordination a lot easier." Provincial operations are monitored easily.

She compares Sun Cellular's services to getting the perfect spa treatment. "There's nothing like the P80,000 yearly savings we get from Sun. It's my ultimate stress reliever!"

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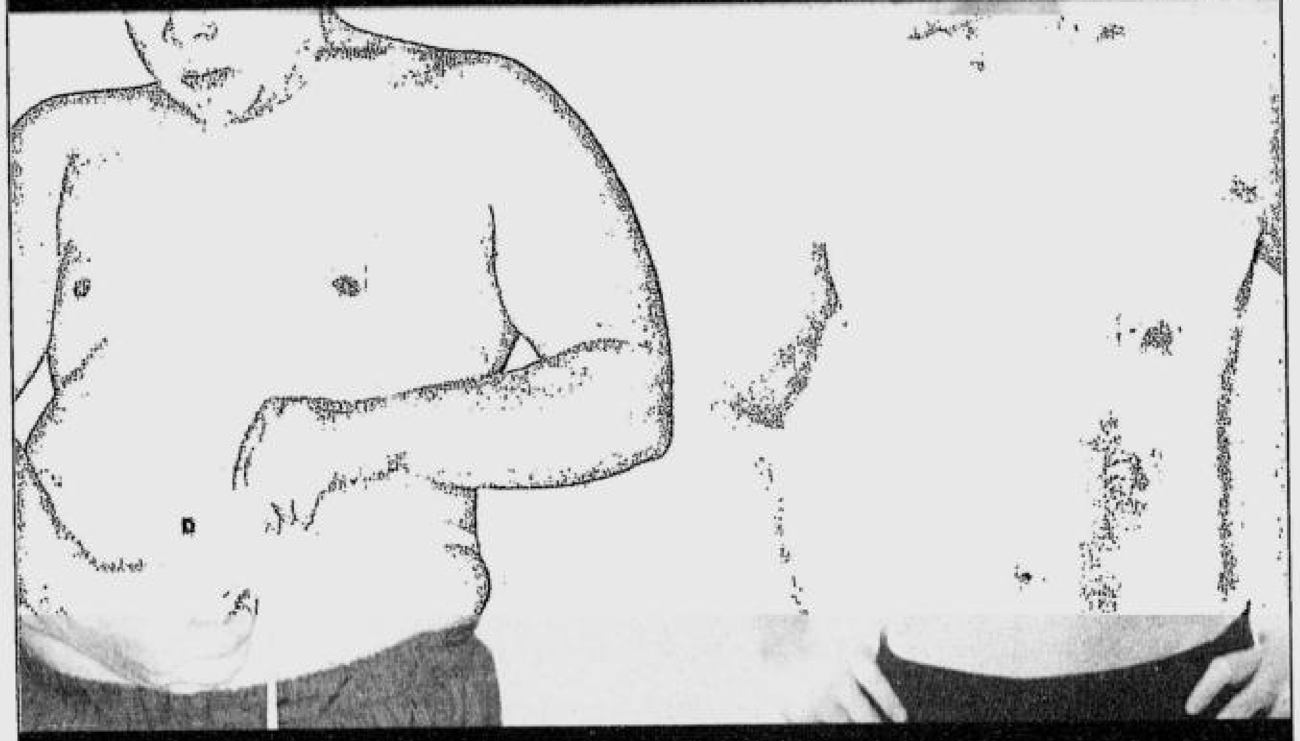

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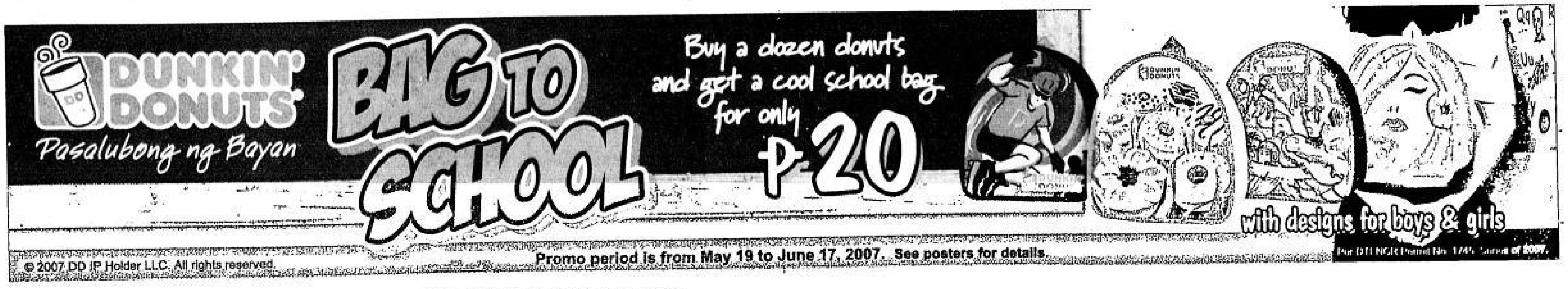

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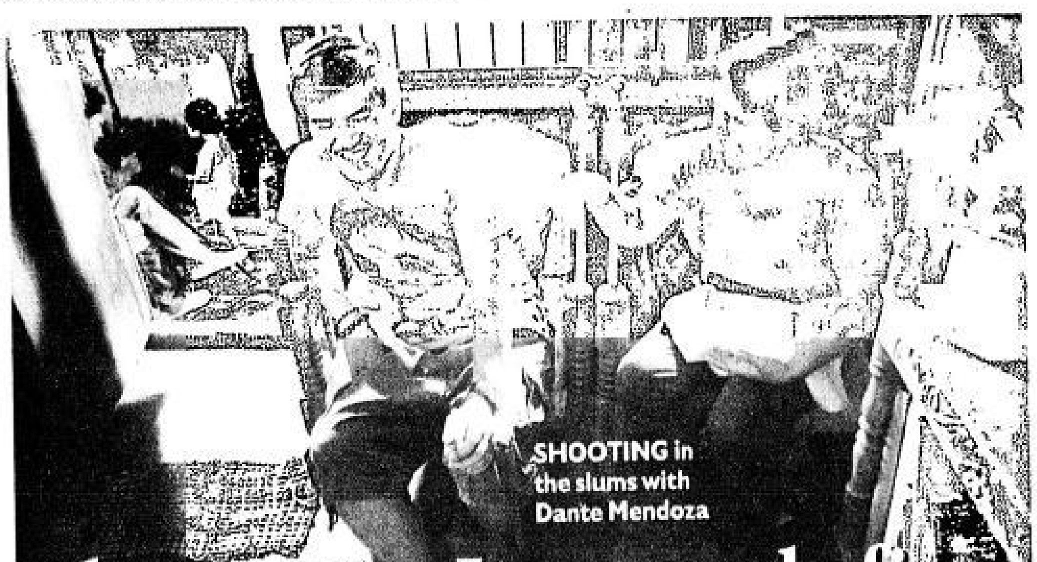


SHOOTING in the slums with Dante Mendoza

Cherry Pie: It was only five, but it did feel like 10 minutes

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IT FELT LIKE 10, BUT IT WAS more like five minutes nonstop.

Actress Cherry Pie Picache, in a text message from Cannes, France, mentioned that the standing ovation received by "Foster Child" "ran for five, but it felt like 10 minutes. The director [Brillante Mendoza] and I had to stand up four times to acknowledge the applause."

She summed up the audience response in France, thus: "Overwhelming."

The Filipino film "Foster Child"—directed by Brillante "Dante" Mendoza, produced by Robbie Tan and top-billed by Picache—received the enthusiastic audience feedback during its world premiere held at the Theater Croisette at the Hotel Hilton Cannes last Friday.

"Foster Child" was among the 23 feature and 12 short films shown at the Directors' Fortnight section of the 60th Cannes International Film Festival.

Picache recounted that she saw "only two other Filipinos in the audience."

(Apart from the production team, the Filipino delegation also consisted of representatives from the Film Development Council of the Philippines and the International Film Festival Committee.)

MENDOZA in Cannes RUBEN NEPALES

No barriers

Although most of the audience members were foreigners, the language barrier (the film was shown in Tagalog with French and English subtitles) didn't prevent them from responding to the film's message, related Picache.

"Women were crying," recalled Picache. Later, she found out that those women were originally from France but had been living in Colombia for three years. "They had met women like my character Thelma."

Picache plays a woman from the slums who temporarily cares for orphaned or abandoned children, as part of a government-sponsored foster program. "A man said he had related to the film because the situation exists in his country Mexico," she said.

Biggest impact

One thing's for certain, the audience found four-year-old actor, Kier Segundo, who plays her foster child in the film, "endearing and amiable," Picache recalled.

Other cast members are Eugene Domingo, Dan Alvaro, Jiro Manio and Alwyn Uytingco.

During the premiere, the part that had the most impact on the audience was the ending, "the culmination of Thelma's journey with her foster child [who would be adopted by Americans]."

During the press conference earlier that day, most of the questions centered on the adoption system, the poverty and the state of the film industry in the Philippines.

"One journalist commented that, even though the Philippines is poor, we are rich in talented, world-class filmmakers," Picache said. "They were interested in Dante's filmmaking style, which followed real time."

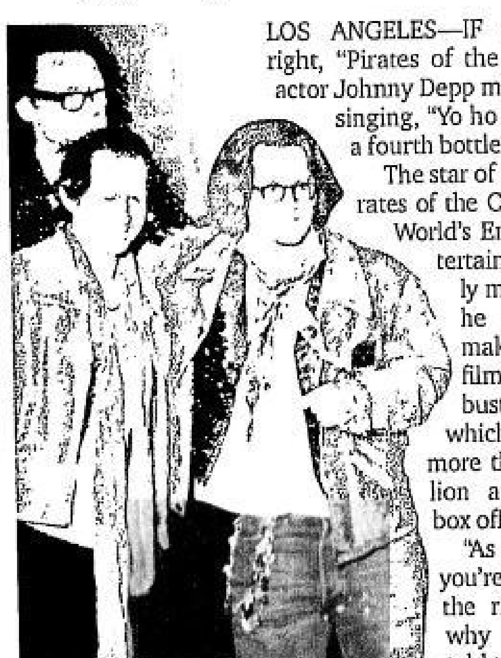
According to Tan, "Two extra screenings on Saturday were added due to the positive feedback."

On the streets, strangers stopped Picache to congratulate her on the film and her performance.

"They said I was *magnifique*," she said. "I cried. I am so proud of Filipino filmmakers."

Picache flew back to Manila from the festival on Sunday, her birthday. Needless to say, Cannes was an unforgettable birthday gift.

Depp open to fourth 'Pirates' movie



JOHNNY Depp, R, with Keith Richards at the "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End" premiere in Disneyland. REUTERS

LOS ANGELES—IF ALL GOES right, "Pirates of the Caribbean" actor Johnny Depp might soon be singing, "Yo ho ho, give me a fourth bottle of rum."

The star of the film, "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End," told Entertainment Weekly magazine that he is open to making a fourth film in the blockbuster series, which has earned more than $1.7 billion at worldwide box offices.

"As long as you're doing it for the right reasons, why not?" Depp told the magazine. "If we came up with a story where we could explore something absurd or funny or totally insane."

In the movies, Depp plays a buccaneer known as Captain Jack Sparrow, distinguished as much for his swishy hips and love of adventure as his pirating skills. The 43-year-old actor's portrayal of wildly funny Sparrow has been credited with much of the franchise's popularity.

The first film in the series, "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl," was a surprise hit with audiences and critics in summer 2003, and last year "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" turned in blockbuster results despite mixed reviews for too many plot twists.

"At World's End," which is currently showing in theaters, stars Depp, Orlando Bloom, Keira Knightley and Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones.

Depp praised the acting of Richards, who plays Depp's father in the movie and whom Depp has credited with inspiring his portrayal of Jack Sparrow.

"What I didn't expect was he was going to be such a great actor," Depp said. "It was like a gunslinger who arrived in the town, charmed all the women and impressed all the men and then split." *Reuters*

'American Idol' spinoff

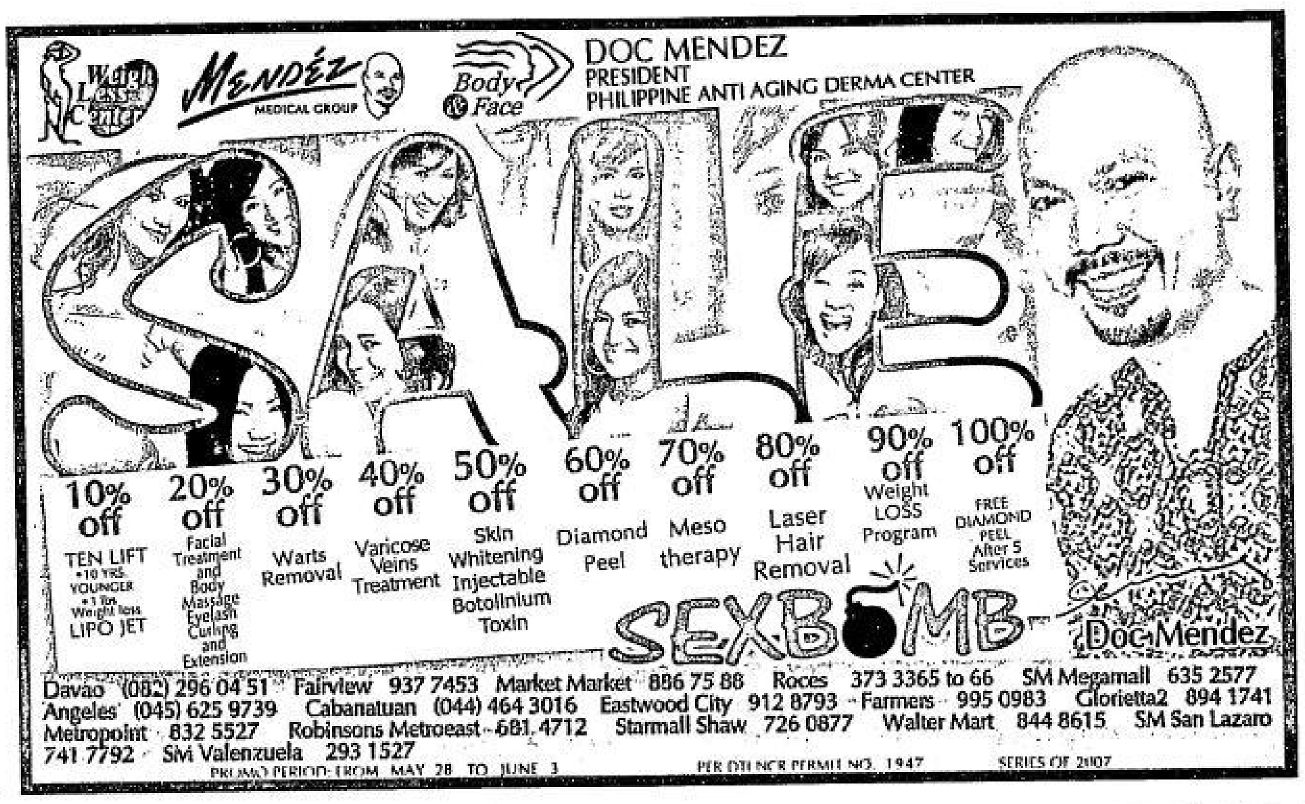
LOS ANGELES—Reality shows can have spinoffs, too. The producers of "American Idol" are launching "The Search for the Next Great American Band," a new talent series.

That is a working title for the Fox show, which will "scour the country, seeking musical groups of all ages, styles and genres," producers 19 Entertainment and FremantleMedia North America said Thursday. An air date was not announced.

For Fox, the spinoff means it is expanding its dependence on the "American Idol" brand, the linchpin of the network's ratings success.

The format as described by the production company parallels Fox's hit singing contest. The band competition will start with nationwide auditions, with judges then narrowing down the entries to 10 semifinalists.

Viewers will decide on who stays and who goes, and the three finalists will compete in a "showdown" for a record contract. *AP*



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6 SHREK 3
10:20 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

7 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
12:00 3:25 6:50 10:00

METRO EAST

Ticket Price: P100 / P110 682-8193 / 682-8199

1 SHREK 3
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

2 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
10:30 1:40 4:50 8:00

3 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
11:30 2:40 5:50 9:00

4 SPIDER-MAN 3
11:00 1:35 4:10 6:45 9:20

5 FRACTURE 12:30 2:45
WHISPER 5:10 7:00 9:00

6 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3:10 6:20

7 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
12:00 3:10 6:20 9:30

8 MESSAGE from HEAVEN
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

NOVALICHES

Ticket Price: P91 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 MESSAGE from HEAVEN
5 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
6 SHREK 3

PIONEER

Ticket Price: P100 687-5378

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
1:10 4:35 8:00

2 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
10:20 1:40 5:05 8:30

3 SPIDER-MAN 3
12:40 3:20 6:00 8:40

4 SHREK 3
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 8:40

STA. ROSA

Ticket Price: P80 (049) 837-0907

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 MESSAGE from HEAVEN
5 SPIDER-MAN 3

LIPA

Ticket Price: [illegible] (043) 757-3664 / P90 (043) 312-5870

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 MESSAGE from HEAVEN
4 SHREK 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3

DASMARIÑAS

Ticket Price: P80 (046) 416-4332

1 MESSAGE from HEAVEN
2 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
5 SHREK

ANGELES

Ticket Price: P 90 (045) 892-2348

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
2 SHREK 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3

IMUS

Ticket Price: [illegible] (046) 875-3638 (046) 471-8188

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 MESSAGE from HEAVEN
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 LUCKY YOU
6 SHREK 3

STARMILLS

Ticket Price: P80 (045) 875-1927

1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 LUCKY YOU
5 MESSAGE from HEAVEN
6 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3

BACOLOD

Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 RESERVE
4 SHREK 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 SUNSHINE

ILOILO

Ticket Price: P70.50 (033) 336-8070

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
2 SHREK 3
3 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
4 SUNSHINE
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3

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1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 SHREK THE THIRD
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
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1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 SHREK THE THIRD

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
5 RESERVED

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 5433994

1 SHREK THE THIRD
2 SPIDER-MAN-3
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3

THEATRES

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 SHREK THE THIRD
3 RESRVED
4 RESRVED

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(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
8 SHREK THE THIRD
9 SPIDER-MAN-3
10 WHISPER

Blue Wave MALL-UNION
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 (DOLBY) SHREK THE THIRD
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
4 (DOLBY) SPIDER-MAN-3

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 SHREK THE THIRD
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
5 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 CONDEMNED
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 SHREK THE THIRD

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 SHREK THE THIRD
4 SPIDER-MAN-3 / LUCKY YOU

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 TURISTAS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 SHREK THE THIRD
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3

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1 SHREK THE THIRD
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 THE HILLS OF EYES
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
4 SPIDER-MAN-3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Mandel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 SHREK THE THIRD

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1 THE CONDEMNED
2 SPIDER-MAN-3

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
2 RAMPADORA
3 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
4 THE CONDEMNED

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
2 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 HANNIBAL RISING
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 THE REAPING
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
2 LIGAYA KATUMBAS AY BUHAY

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MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 SHREK 3
1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30, 10:50
G

2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3
12:40, 4:10, 7:50, 11:30
G

3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3
12:00, 3:30, 7:10, 10:50
G

4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3
11:30, 2:50, 6:30, 10:10
G

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DOLBY DIGITAL

PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 3 G 11:00,2:20,5:40,9:00	SHREK 3 G 11:15,1:20,3:25,5:30, 7:35,9:40	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 3 G 1:30,4:50,8:10
PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 3 G 11:50,3:10,6:30,9:50	SPIDER-MAN 3 G 12:50,3:50,6:50,9:50	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 3 G 12:40,4:00,7:20,10:40

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBBEAN 3 (GP)
12:00, 3:20, 6:40, 10:00

2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 (GP)
1:00, 4:20, 7:40

3 SHREK 3 (GP)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30
5:30, 7:30, 9:30

4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 (GP)
2:00, 5:20, 8:40

PREMIERE THEATRE PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 (GP) 2:50, 6:10, 9:30

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NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
10:30, 2:00, 5:30
9:00
GP

CINEMA 2 SHREK 03
10:35, 12:40, 2:45
4:50, 6:55, 9:00
GP

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NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 SHREK 03
11:35, 1:40, 3:45
5:50, 7:55, 10:00
GP

CINEMA 4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
11:25, 2:55, 6:25
10:00
GP

CINEMA 5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
12:15, 3:45, 7:15
10:45
GP

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MUSIC MUSEUM	June 15 & 16, 2007	Rico J. Puno & Mitch Valdez	8:00 PM
TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS	EVERY MONDAY May 31, 2007 June 15, 2007	DANCE NIGHT RJ Jimenez Champion of the World (Jed Madela)	7:00 PM 8:00 PM 8:30 PM

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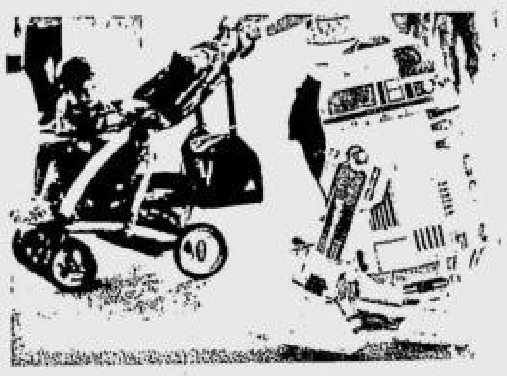
STAR WARS CELEBRATION

Android racing and duels with Darth



FANS old and young have a field day during the opening of "Star Wars Celebration IV" in Los Angeles, a five-day convention that marks the 30th anniversary of the cinema saga. They came in costumes depicting their favorite characters, including Darth Vader, left. Kids trooped to a "Jedi Training Academy" for light saber duels. REUTERS

LOS ANGELES—WHITE-ARMORED STORM troopers, robed Jedi knights and bun-haired Princess Leia look-alikes roamed the Los Angeles Convention Center on Friday to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the "Star Wars" film phenomenon.

The sprawling event, billed as the world's biggest "Star Wars" party, opened to the general public as thousands of fans young and old shopped for memorabilia, posed for photographs and generally immersed themselves in ways of "the Force."

"This can be one-stop shopping for fans to experience everything they would want in the 'Star Wars' world," said John Singh, a spokesman for "Star Wars" creator George Lucas' production company, Lucasfilm, a sponsor of the event.

Special activities included "Star Wars" laser tag, "Slave Leia" belly-dancing lessons, a storm trooper Olympics, R2-D2 android racing, a costume workshop and an appearance by Carrie Fisher, who starred as Princess Leia.

The US Postal Service used the Friday opening to dedicate its first stamps commemorating the 30th anniversary of the movie that revolutionized special-effects filmmaking.

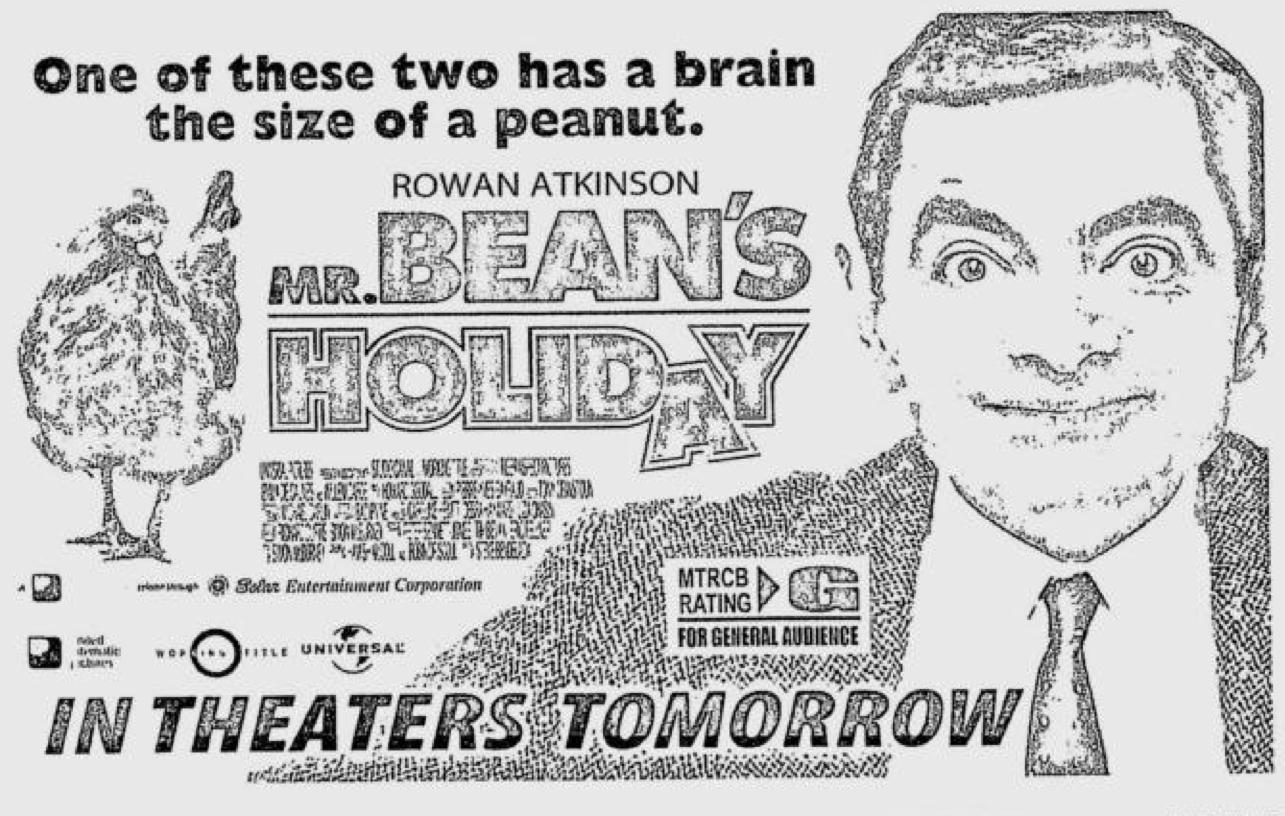
Promoters said 20,000 tickets were sold in advance, and they expected at least another 10,000 admissions over the Memorial Day weekend.

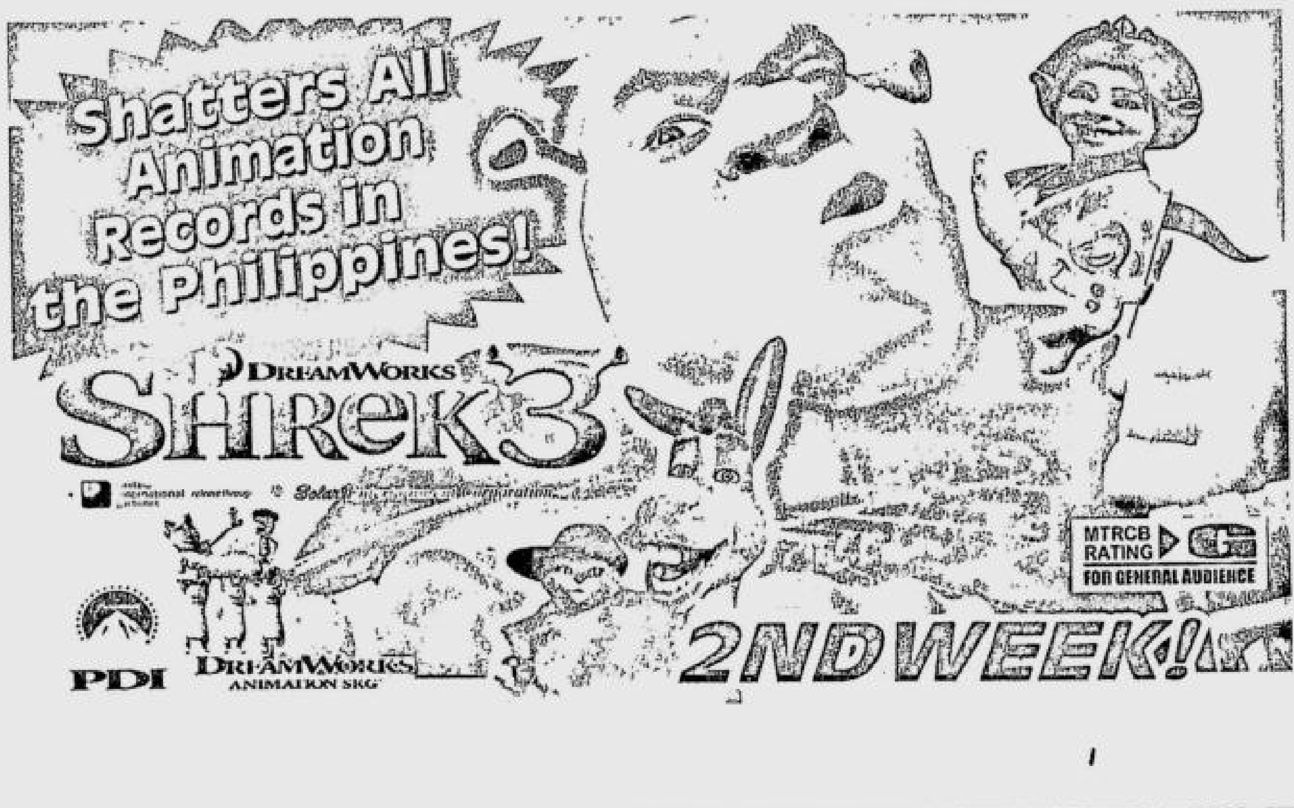
One of the revelers, Rob Howes, 35, of Anaheim, California, said he was 6 when the first "Star Wars" opened in 1977. "I was very impressionable and it just grabbed me and didn't let go," said Howes, dressed as a Rebel Hoth fighter pilot in an orange suit.

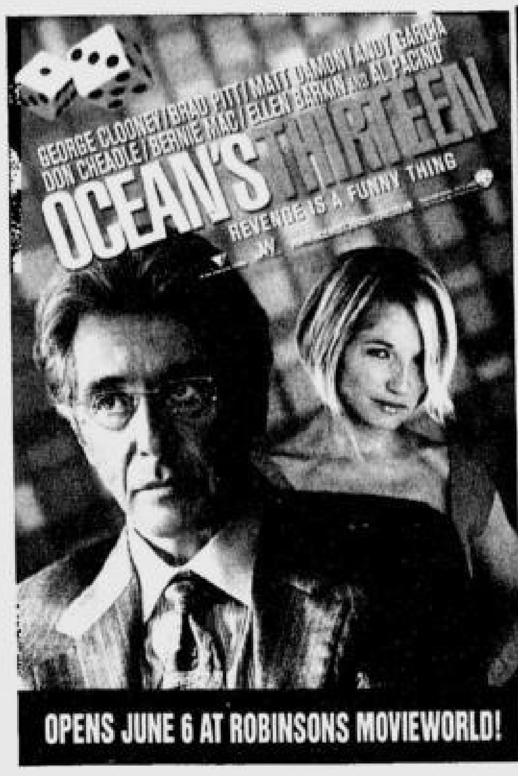
From the other side of the Empire marched Evan Greenwood, 28, of Kansas, in a helmeted, robot-like storm trooper uniform, complete with hydration pack and a 12-volt pump to circulate cooling water under the suit.

"We marched up the steps with Darth as he slaughtered the Jedi," Greenwood said as he paused to remove his helmet.

Other young fans lined up at the convention's Jedi Training Academy, where they took turns engaging in one-on-one light saber duels with a very authentic-looking Darth Vader, and received guidance from a Jedi master. *Reuters*



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a. on Cheadle b. Djimon Honsou

c. Eddie Murphy

Please email answers to: saharajean.gamica@robinsonsland.com with your complete name, address, contact number. There will be different questions each day. Winners will be notified via email.

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	SHREK 3 1:30 / 2:05 / 4:00 / 4:35 6:30 / 7:05 / 9:00 / 9:35	**WHISPER** 12:30 / 5:05 / 9:40
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PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3
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ALIMALL 5

1	**SHREK 3** 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00	2	**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3** 12:40 / 3:50 / 7:00
3	**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3** 11:30 / 2:40 / 5:50 / 9:00	4	**MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN** 12:20 / 2:20 / 4:20 / 6:20 / 8:20
5	**SPIDERMAN 3** 12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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THE EARLY STAGES OF PARENTING:

It's all about Stimulation

When it comes to parenting, providing the very best for your child is of the foremost concern. But these days, it doesn't simply mean pulling out all the stops in choosing the right schools. Now, proper parenting goes hand-in-hand with providing your child with the right stimuli for proper brain development.

Research shows that using music, play or nutrition can help enhance the developing mind during your child's earliest stages. But by combining the three, you can make sure you are giving your child a complete system that will strengthen the foundation for his brain development. And there's no better time to start than at the beginning.

THE PRENATAL MIND
Communication with your baby is possible the moment you learn of your pregnancy. In fact, studies show that listening to classical music can help stimulate a child's brain development as early as the prenatal stage. Complex classical music, particularly when listened to during your third trimester of pregnancy, has been found to help develop areas in the baby's brain necessary for math and spatial reasoning.

Prenatal play is another form of stimulation that also helps foster a stronger bond between you and your child. Talking to him, stroking him through the belly and exposing him to light vibrations are not only pleasurable for him, they also open him up to stimuli early on that will develop more brain connections and pathways to the world outside the womb.

In this stage, it is also important for moms to have proper nutrition, which includes a diet rich in brain-building nutrients DHA and Choline.

THE BRAIN IN ITS INFANCY
Several areas of the brain are used to process music. Some of these areas are also responsible for processing learning, memory and language. Before your child reaches his twelfth month, he responds to sounds and melodies better and does not fully comprehend speech yet. As he ages, however, he will begin to understand music the same way he will understand speech—by listening to others around him, and opening his own mouth to practice making sounds.

When your child's vision begins to develop, he should be exposed to contrasting colors such as red, black and white, which help stimulate his visual development. These colors can be introduced to him through age-appropriate toys that are soft and safe to play with.

Children at this age should also be given proper nutrition. At birth, a child's brain is 25% its approximate adulthood weight, so he needs to be given a diet rich in brain-building nutrients such as DHA and ARA at clinically proven levels, and Choline at Institute of Medicine (IOM), which can be found in breastmilk.

TODDLING TOWARDS PRESCHOOL
When your child is old enough to recognize words and their meanings, it would be a good time to listen to nursery rhymes with him. Singing along reinforces his language development. At the same time, the rhythmic pattern may help your child learn a number of other skills, such as sequencing or cause-and-effect relationships. Long-term benefits in this case include higher scores on tests such as math, increased efficiency in the communication between the two brain hemispheres, better reading scores and enhanced listening skills.

When your child reaches an age where he can easily move around on his own, you'll see that he plays more. And the good news is that play is actually his way of learning. By engaging in games like Do You See What I See?, which reinforce his language development, vocabulary-building and problem-solving skills, or creative crafts such as origami-making, his mind is further developed and he is able to think for himself and express himself in his own way.

And naturally, it is key to continuously provide your child with the essential nutrients, DHA, ARA and Choline, to help support his brain development.

Parenting might just be the most difficult job on earth, but if you properly stimulate your child through music, play and nutrition, you will have the right system at hand to help ensure that you are helping your child's brain development. After all, observing your own child develop in leaps and bounds during these early years will be worth the experience.

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2:30PM 5:30PM 8:30PM
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- P 350 (After 5 p.m., Mon-Thu; Whole Day, Fri-Sun, Holidays)
T-REX
1:00PM Admission Prices: P 200
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 28 WEEKS LATER
3 SHREK 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 SHREK/ WHISPER
6 FRACTURE
PREMIERE CINEMA
SPIDER-MAN 3
CENTERSTAGE
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
CINEMA 2
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
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SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
6 SHREK 3
7 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
8 WHISPER
9 SHREK 3
10 SPIDER-MAN 3
11 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
12 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

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1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 FRACTURE
6 SHREK 3
7 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
8 WHISPER
9 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
10 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
11 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
12 SHREK 3

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 28 WEEKS LATER
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 SHREK 3
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
7 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
8 SHREK 3
9 SPIDER-MAN 3
10 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
11 SPIDER-MAN 3
12 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SHREK 3
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
6 FRACTURE
7 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
8 RESERVED
9 28 WEEKS LATER
10 WHISPER

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SHREK 3
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
6 SHREK 3

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SHREK 3
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 FRACTURE
8 SHREK 3
9 WHISPER

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 SHREK 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 WHISPER
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 SHREK 3
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
7 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
8 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
9 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
10 SHREK 3
11 28 WEEKS LATER
12 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SHREK 3

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SHREK 3

Regine Velasquez Piolo Pascual

Paano kita Iibigin

Red Carpet
PREMIERE
Regine Velasquez Piolo Pascual
Paano kita Iibigin
Directed by Bb. Joyce Bernal
TONIGHT
SM Megamall Cinema 10
7:30 p.m
Watch on the same day at Cinema 9 at regular ticket prices.
Buy your tickets now!

LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 SHREK 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 28 WEEKS LATER
8 WHISPER

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SHREK 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 LUCKY YOU

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 SHREK 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SHREK 3

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 LUCKY YOU
5 SHREK 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM CIY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SHREK 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 SHREK 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 SHREK 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811
1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 SUNSHINE
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SHREK 3
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SHREK 3
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 SUNSHINE
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 PERFECT STRANGER
5 SHREK 3
6 FIREHOUSE DOG
7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 SUNSHINE/ SPIDER-MAN 3

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

JR VALENTIN, second from R, and Nathan Lopez in "Maxi," which was shot with a mini-DV camera.

Blowing up 'Maxi'

Experts explain how a movie shot with a mini-DV was transferred to 35mm film

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THERE IS A RAGING DEBATE in the industry: Is digital technology boon or bane to independent filmmakers?

The case of UFO Pictures' "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros," shot by director Auraeus Solito with a mini-DV (specifically, a Panasonic DVX 100A), has proven instructive, says Marc Ambat, chief technical officer of Optima Digital, the post-production firm that "blew up" the digital movie to 35mm film using high-definition technology.

"There's a lot to be said about the mini-DV's capability to shoot in low-light conditions. It's really subjective, depending on how the cinematographer will handle the camera. But in a situation that will not permit you to light properly, you may not get a good picture," explains Ambat.

"In the end, you'd be spending more on post-production," adds Tito Velasco, chief operating officer of Engine Room (Optima's sister company) and Unico Entertainment, international distributor of "Maxi."

By the time Unico picked up "Maxi" for distribution, the question on everyone's mind was: "How can we improve the material?"

"We decided to bump it up to a higher resolution, color-grade it and 'output' it based on international standards," Ambat relates.

The original "Maxi" on 35m film that hit local theaters two years ago "had bland colors and a lot of dark scenes," Ambat recalls.

"The normal process of shooting with a mini-DV and blowing up straight to 35mm film (kinescoping) doesn't enhance picture quality. You stand to lose a lot because you are essentially moving from an electronic to a chemical medium," Velasco clarifies.

MARC AMBAT RUDY ESPERAS

Better method

Ambat notes: "What happened was, something electronic (shot with a mini-DV), a pixel this small, was blown up 80 times to fit a movie screen." Loss of sharpness and subtle colors and deterioration of overall quality were inevitable, he says. "You are left with images close to black-and-white, with a bluish hue."

For "Maxi's" theatrical release in LA and New York (and, for the second time, in Manila) last year, Optima and Unico veered away from the usual method.

"We employed the process that it should've undergone in the first place. We took the master DV and blew it up to high definition first. In so doing, we were color-grading a bigger pixel," Ambat says. Using the right post-production negative is also crucial, he adds. "An intermediate negative—a low-contrast negative that will enable the burning in of an image and give a wider latitude for contrast and color stability at the same time—is advisable."

Having learned from "Maxi," Ambat and Velasco are now offering their expertise and the facilities of Optima Digital and Engine Room to young filmmakers with scripts that have the same crossover potential as "Maxi."

"That's what the integrated approach to filmmaking is all about," says Velasco.

When quantity masquerades as quality

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT World's End" is a fun film romp—only, there's so much of it!

As Will Turner (**Orlando Bloom**) and Elizabeth Swann (**Keira Knightley**) risk life and limb trying to rescue Capt. Jack Sparrow (**Johnny Depp**) from Davey Jones' locker, the production throws in everything—*including* the sink, the bathwater *and* the baby, to keep the viewers thoroughly entertained.

Grateful but ...

We're grateful for the heaps and heaps of entertainment, but after we finish seeing the overlong and overlush production, we feel like going on a cinematic diet! We hope that filmmakers really do get around to believing that less *is* more.

In the case of directors of sequels, however, that isn't likely to happen. As they go from hit to hit, they also become terribly insecure over the possibility that viewers may find their film franchise wearing thin. So, they pile on one cinematic treat after another to keep moviegoers astounded—and hopefully entertained.

So what if it's quantity masquerading as quality? As long as viewers keep trooping to the theaters in escalating numbers, they feel it's all worth it. Call it overkill, but if the series of sequels continues to slay them, it's all good.

Well, for this moviegoer, it's an embarrassment—and a surfeit—of riches. And we wish that director **Gore Verbinski** had been more confident about his extended story's ability to keep viewer's interested without going overboard in terms of colorful characters, zany situations and dazzling visual effects.

The film's final third is particularly problematic in this regard, because this is where the production's many loose ends, subplots and themes have to be tied up as efficiently as possible—which, given their sheer number, turns out to be: not very.

Take the nine pirate lords who combine forces to fight the dastardly British navy: each one of them has to be extra-colorful, and the movie has to take up precious time "doing justice" to their respective idiosyncratic ties.

Fact is, all that detail isn't necessary, because the pirate bands act in tandem, anyway—and all these "interesting" bits of texture retard the storytelling.

Still a treat

For instance, the development of a key sword fight high up on the ship's mast is delayed for *minutes*, because so much time is used up detailing other concurrently unfolding sequences.

Otherwise, "At World's End" is a fun viewing treat, with bracingly original visual highlights like stones turning into a sea of crabs, and an entire ship turning turtle when it finally reaches the "end" of the world.

On point of performance, Depp, Bloom, **Geoffrey Rush** (as Barbosa) and **Chow Yun-Fat** (as an oriental pirate lord) make the screen crackle and pop, but Knightley looks wan and ineffectual in comparison. Maybe she needs to put more meat on her bones to become more credible as a pirate queen?

She has a couple of years to do that, because it looks like the next chapter of the pirates' tale could eventually be written and shot: At film's end, "At World's End" has Sparrow setting sail for another waterlogged adventure, in search of—the fabled Fountain of Youth. *Bon Voyage, mon gaucherie!*

'Light Talk'

The third season of "Light Talk" began on May 20 on ABC-5. The talk show produced by Jesuit Communication Foundation is hosted by Bishop **Chito Tagle**, and is telecast every Sunday at 11 p.m. JesCom seeks to produce quality TV shows that not only provide information, but also bring out the best in viewers.

'Day Watch'

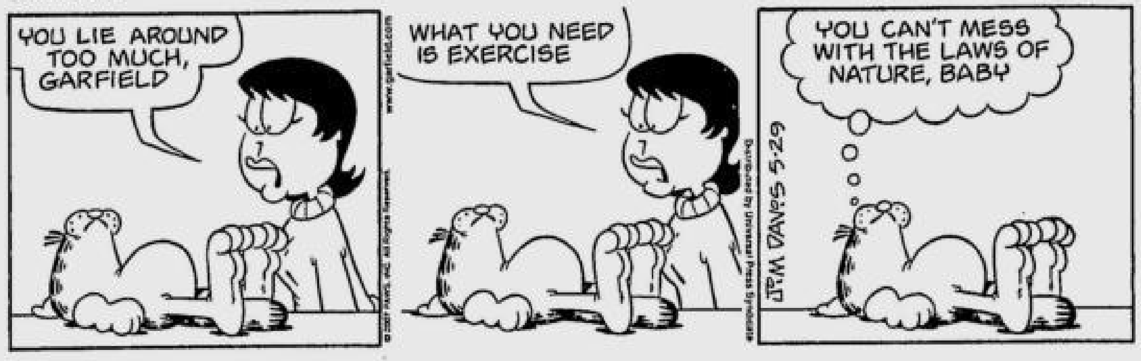
The balance between the forces of light and darkness will be broken by newcomer **Dmitry Martinov** in the cutting-edge thriller "Day Watch."

The film features the cinematic vision of director-writer **Timur Bekmambetor**. It is set in contemporary Moscow, where the eternal war between the forces of light and darkness has reached its tragic outcome, as each side gains a powerful Great Other.

Martinov plays Yegor, who joins the dark forces, even as his father Anton allies himself with the forces of light.

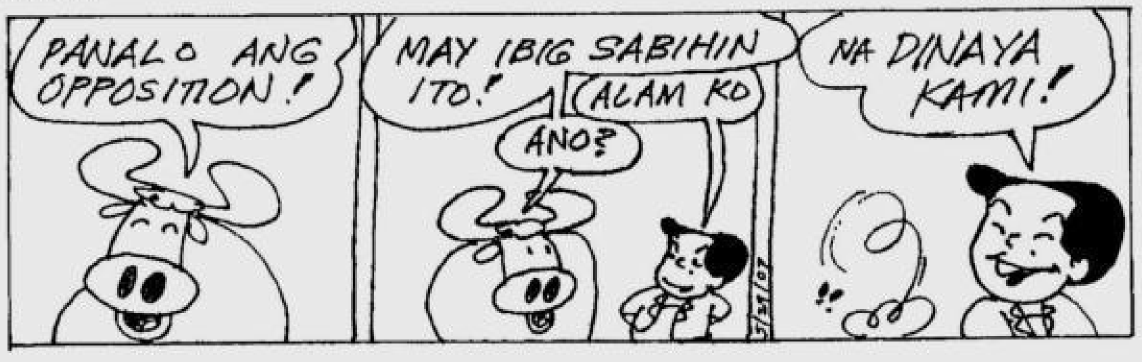
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


YOU LIE AROUND TOO MUCH, GARFIELD
WHAT YOU NEED IS EXERCISE
YOU CAN'T MESS WITH THE LAWS OF NATURE, BABY
www.garfield.com
JPM DAVIS 5-29
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

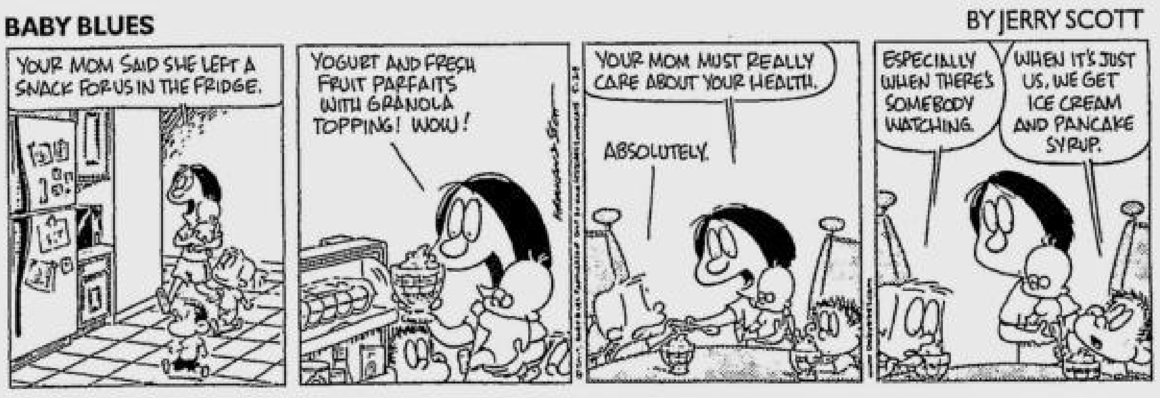
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PANALO ANG OPPOSITION!
MAY IBIG SABIHIN ITO!
ANO?
ALAM KO
NA DINAYA KAMI!
5/29/07

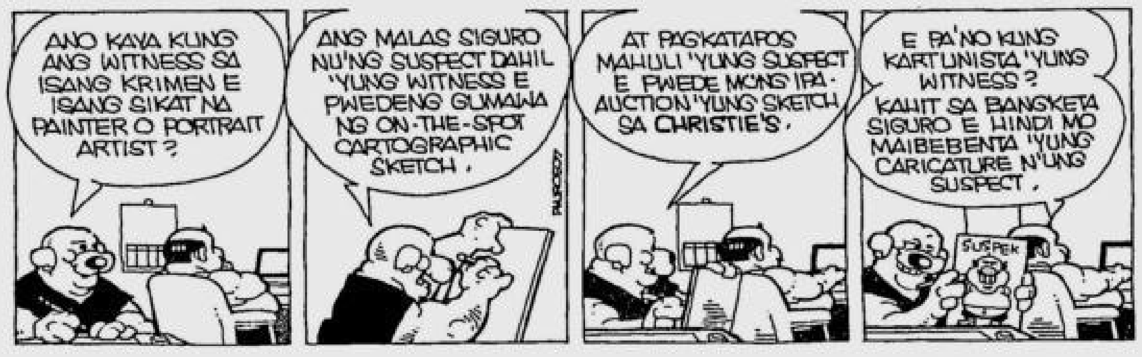
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YOUR MOM SAID SHE LEFT A SNACK FOR US IN THE FRIDGE.
YOGURT AND FRESH FRUIT PARFAITS WITH GRANOLA TOPPING! WOW!
YOUR MOM MUST REALLY CARE ABOUT YOUR HEALTH.
ABSOLUTELY.
ESPECIALLY WHEN THERE'S SOMEBODY WATCHING.
WHEN IT'S JUST US, WE GET ICE CREAM AND PANCAKE SYRUP.

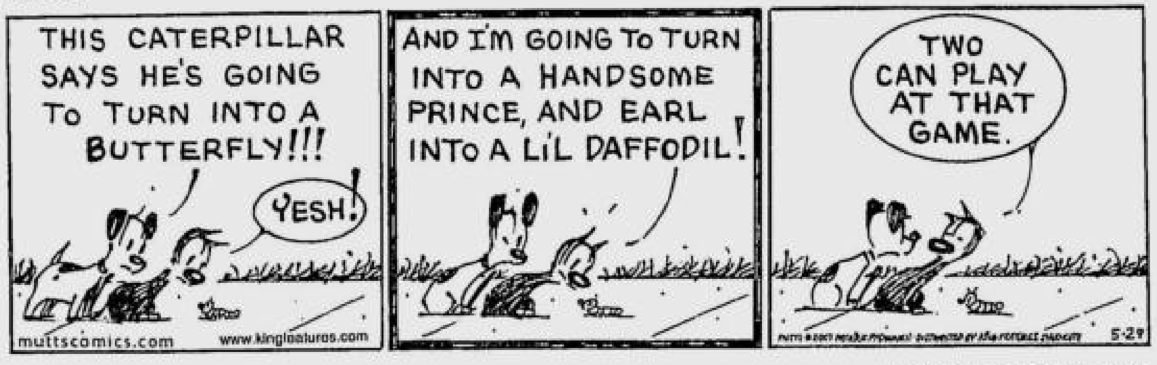
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO KAYA KUNG ANG WITNESS SA ISANG KRIMEN E ISANG SIKAT NA PAINTER O PORTRAIT ARTIST?
ANG MALAS SIGURO NU'NG SUSPECT DAHIL 'YUNG WITNESS E PWEDENG GUMAWA NG ON-THE-SPOT CARTOGRAPHIC SKETCH.
AT PAGKATAPOS MAHULI 'YUNG SUSPECT E PWEDE MONG IPA-AUCTION 'YUNG SKETCH SA CHRISTIE'S.
E PA'NO KUNG KARTUNISTA 'YUNG WITNESS? KAHIT SA BANGKETA SIGURO E HINDI MO MAIBEBENTA 'YUNG CARICATURE N'UNG SUSPECT.
SUSPEK

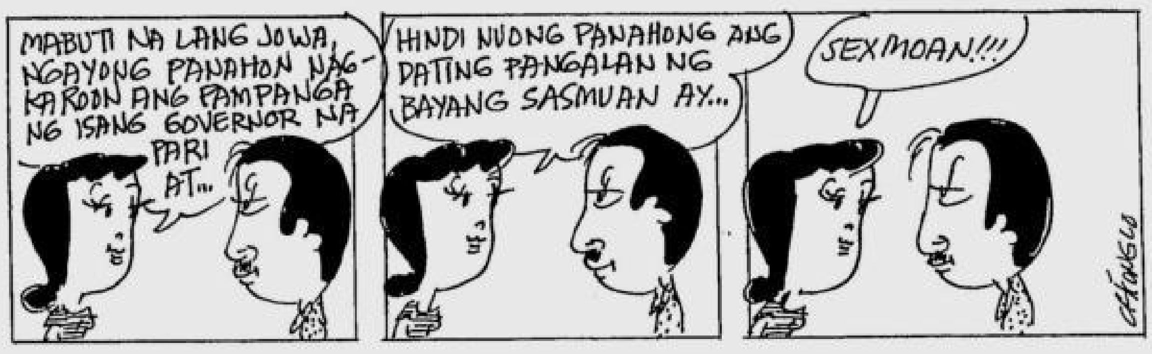
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THIS CATERPILLAR SAYS HE'S GOING TO TURN INTO A BUTTERFLY!!!
YESH!
AND I'M GOING TO TURN INTO A HANDSOME PRINCE, AND EARL INTO A LI'L DAFFODIL!
TWO CAN PLAY AT THAT GAME.
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
5-29

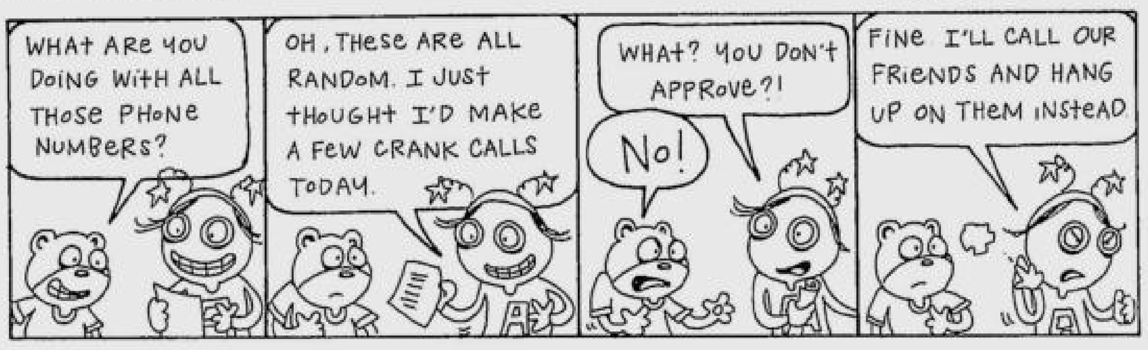
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MABUTI NA LANG JOWA, NGAYONG PANAHON NAGKAROON ANG PAMPANGA NG ISANG GOVERNOR NA PARI AT...
HINDI NUONG PANAHONG ANG DATING PANGALAN NG BAYANG SASMUAN AY...
SEXMOAN!!!
CHIONGLO

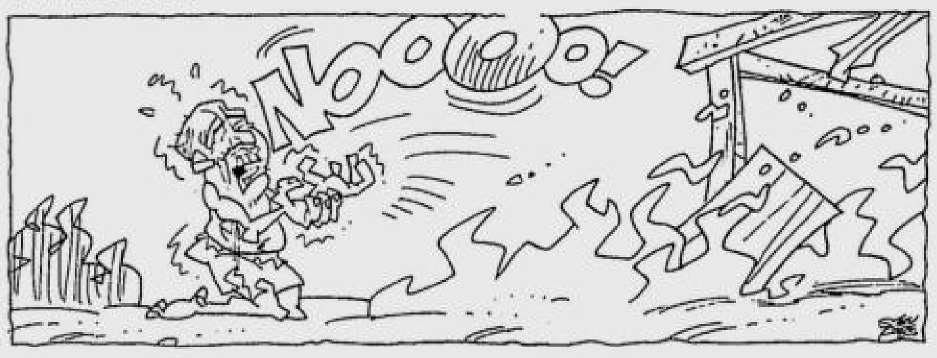
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH ALL THOSE PHONE NUMBERS?
OH, THESE ARE ALL RANDOM. I JUST THOUGHT I'D MAKE A FEW CRANK CALLS TODAY.
WHAT? YOU DON'T APPROVE?!
NO!
FINE. I'LL CALL OUR FRIENDS AND HANG UP ON THEM INSTEAD.

DIVINE COMEDY

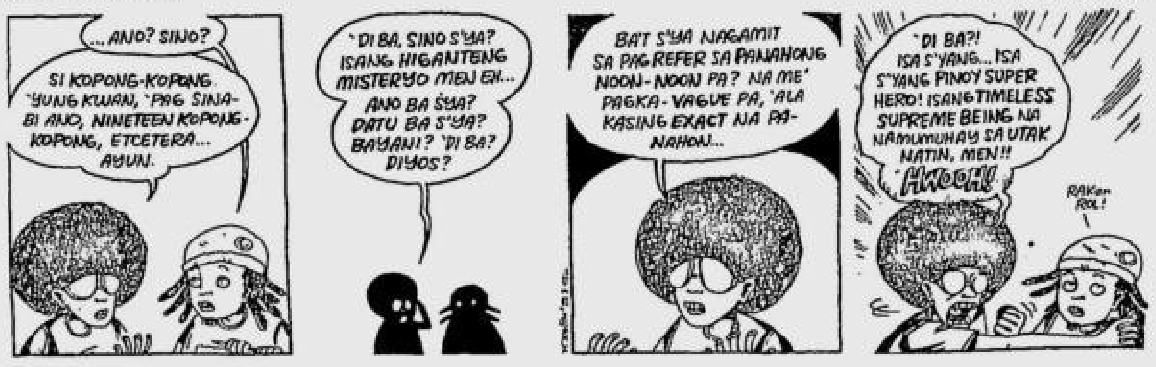
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



BUMALIK ANG PRODIGAL SON SA BAHAY NG KANYANG AMA PAGKATAPOS NYANG PAGSISIHAN ANG KANYANG PAGKAKAMALI. SUBALIT HULI NA ANG LAHAT DAHIL DUMAAN PALA ANG ARMY NI KING XERXES SA BAHAY NILA

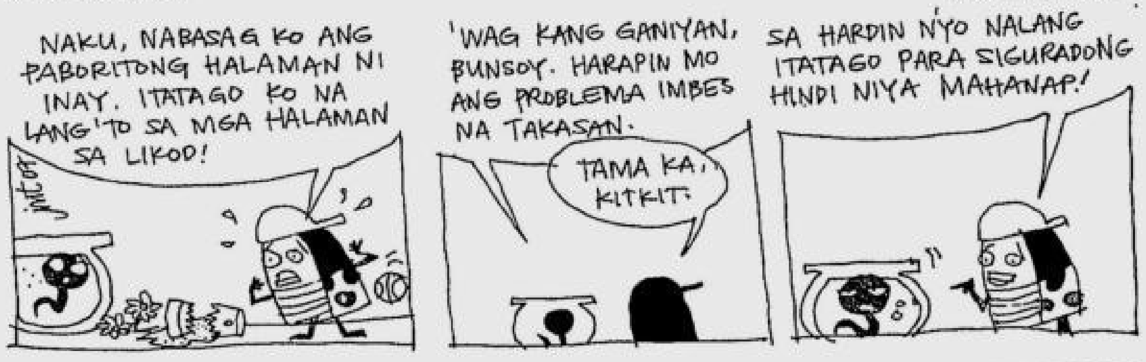
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


...ANO? SINO?
SI KOPONG-KOPONG. 'YUNG KUWAN, 'PAG SINABI ANO, NINETEEN KOPONG-KOPONG, ETCETERA... AYUN.
'DI BA, SINO S'YA? ISANG HIGANTENG MISTERYO MEN EH... ANO BA S'YA? DATU BA S'YA? BAYANI? 'DI BA? DIYOS?
BAT S'YA NAGAMIT SA PAG REFER SA PANAHONG NOON-NOON PA? NA ME' PAGKA-VAGUE PA, 'ALA KASING EXACT NA PANAHON...
'DI BA?! ISA S'YANG... ISA S'YANG PINOY SUPER HERO! ISANG TIMELESS SUPREME BEING NA NAMUMUHAY SA UTAK NATIN, MEN!!
HWOOH!
RAKen ROL!

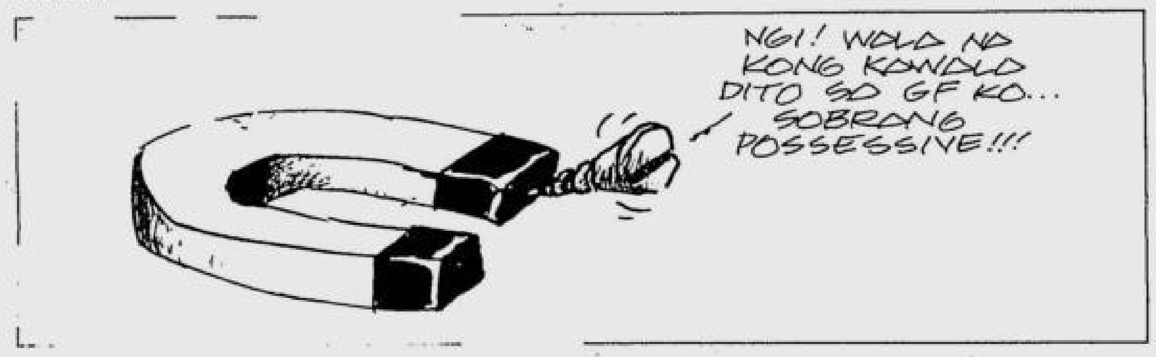
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAKU, NABASAG KO ANG PABORITONG HALAMAN NI INAY. ITATAGO KO NA LANG 'TO SA MGA HALAMAN SA LIKOD!
'WAG KANG GANIYAN, BUNSOY. HARAPIN MO ANG PROBLEMA IMBES NA TAKASAN.
TAMA KA, KITKIT.
SA HARDIN N'YO NALANG ITATAGO PARA SIGURADONG HINDI NIYA MAHANAP!

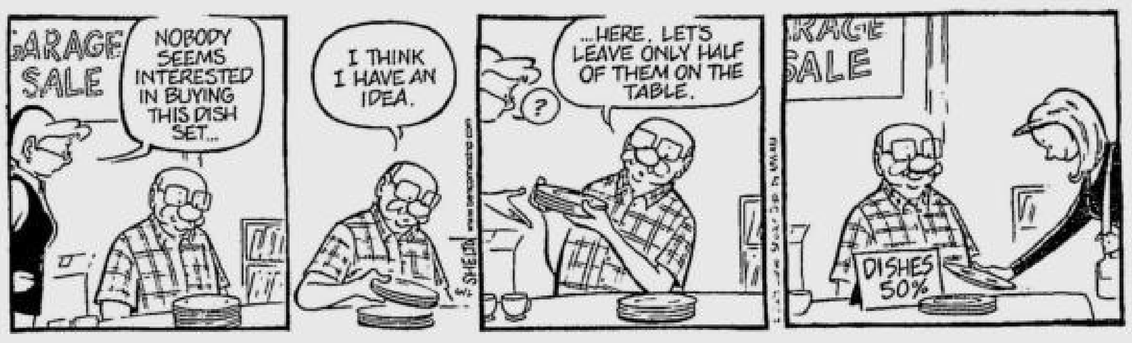
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

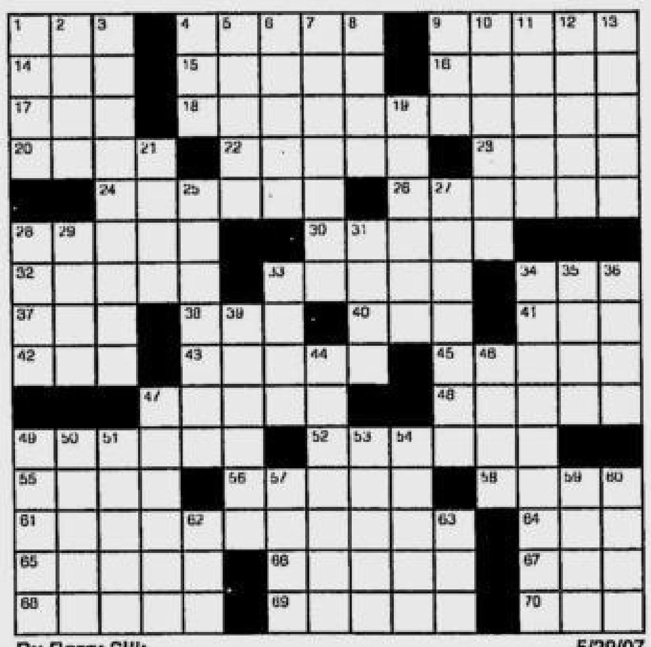

NGI! WALA NA KONG KAWALA DITO SA GF KO... SOBRANG POSSESSIVE!!!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


GARAGE SALE
NOBODY SEEMS INTERESTED IN BUYING THIS DISH SET...
I THINK I HAVE AN IDEA.
...HERE, LET'S LEAVE ONLY HALF OF THEM ON THE TABLE.
?
GARAGE SALE
DISHES 50%

DAILY CROSSWORD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42 43 44 45 46
47 48
49 50 51 52 53 54
55 56 57 58 59 60
61 62 63 64
65 66 67
68 69 70

By Barry Silk
McLean, VA

5/29/07

ACROSS
1 Disparity
4 "All in the Family" spinoff
9 Freshwater ducks
14 Clanton at the O.K. Corral
15 Raised
16 Utter boredom
17 By way of
18 Cocktail choice
20 Bus. letter abbr.
22 Loose cattle
23 __ vera
24 Derby rides
26 Sheets, etc.
28 Caine film
30 Decathlon tenth
32 "The __ of the Baskervilles"
33 Ways of walking
34 Mach+ jet
37 Axlike tool
38 Reagan-era mil. program
40 IL winter hrs.
41 Western tribesman
42 Oh yeah, __ who?
43 Data display
45 Bummer!
47 Check endorser
48 Springs
49 Relishes
52 Having no axis extremities
55 Cry of dismay
56 Actress Rosie
58 Batters' stats
61 Schelder film
64 Luau strings
65 Plantation machine
66 Hatcher and Garr
67 Zimbabwe's capital?
68 Actress Talia
69 Bewildered
70 Shoot with a ray gun

DOWN
1 Be charitable
2 Related (to)
3 Adolescent stubble
4 Greek letters
5 Top-grade topper
6 Slightly ahead
7 Kind of diver
8 Verge
9 Five after five
10 __ terrible (bad boy)
11 Old-womanish
12 Philippines island
13 Dimensions
19 Coves
21 Pork cut
25 Antares, e.g.
27 Establish
28 Discovery cries
29 Mine vein
31 Moral failing
33 Taunt
34 Phoenix and Carney comic book series
35 Dance move
36 Summer shirts
39 Jobsite for a masseuse
44 CEO's plane, perhaps
46 Have on
47 Wall hanging
49 Some Swedish cars
50 Muslim God
51 The 4 Seasons singer Frankie
53 Boscs and Bartletts
54 Harriet's hubby
57 Bluesy James
59 Home decor company
60 Leak out slowly
62 Otto I's realm
63 Half a Gabor?

Monday's Puzzle Solved

F	A	R	C	E	■	A	B	B	E	■	P	A	P	A
A	C	O	R	N	■	L	O	U	T	■	A	M	E	S
I	M	P	E	D	E	D	P	R	O	G	R	E	S	S
R	E	E	D	■	L	O	S	E	■	A	A	R	O	N
■	■	■	I	I	I	■	■	A	L	B	S	■	■	■
T	E	S	T	F	O	R	Q	U	A	L	I	T	Y	■
I	N	C	■	S	T	O	A	■	V	E	T	O	E	D
E	T	A	L	■	■	E	T	A	■	■	E	R	N	E
R	E	P	A	S	S	■	A	V	I	S	■	S	T	L
■	R	E	S	T	A	U	R	A	N	T	B	I	L	L
■	■	■	S	O	O	N	■	■	T	E	E	■	■	■
S	A	V	O	R	■	S	P	A	R	■	D	I	E	D
C	L	A	I	M	R	A	I	N	O	R	B	O	D	Y
O	D	I	N	■	E	F	T	S	■	C	U	T	I	N
T	A	N	G	■	M	E	S	A	■	A	G	A	T	E

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5/28/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have strong nurturing instincts. You're extremely persevering in your commitment to your causes. You have altruistic, humanitarian values and want to improve the lives of others. You value tradition. You're a skilled communicator, who knows how to pepper your comments with dry wit. Count on learning something very valuable this year.

Birthdate of: Annette Bening, actress; John F. Kennedy, US president; Rupert Everett, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might have to compromise with the values of others today, even if you don't want to. Quite likely, you won't have a choice. Just go with the flow and appear cooperative.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): The Moon is opposite your sign today, so it's a good idea to go more than halfway when dealing with others. Actually, you probably won't have a choice.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Make an extra effort today to get better organized at work and at home. Reduce the clutter around you. Tidy up papers, magazines and books.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel playful and prankish today. You want to have fun. You also might enjoy some sly flirtations. Watch a game; see a movie; enjoy playful activities with children.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Focus on home, family and real estate issues today. Tidy up a few loose details in your domestic scene. Do anything to improve where you live.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is a busy day. Expect to take short trips or be busy shopping, buying and selling, wheeling and dealing or negotiating with others. Keep up your pace!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Make friends with your bank account today. Keep an eye on your cash flow. Pay bills or return loaners. You might also dream up some good moneymaking ideas!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): The Moon is in your sign today. Although this can make you a bit more emotional than usual, it also gives you more energy and a bit more luck!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Work alone or behind the scenes today. Sneak away for a break if you can. You need some time to yourself to think. You also need some rest!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): A conversation with a female friend could be significant today. Perhaps someone needs a sympathetic ear, or maybe you need someone to listen to you?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Quite likely, you'll do something that draws attention to yourself today. Be aware of this. Mind your P's and Q's. Use whatever influence you have to improve something or help others.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Avoid boring, routine activities today. Try to shake it up little. You want fun, adventure and something different! It's a good day to make travel plans or develop ideas for further education.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

	6		8		9	2		1
3					4		9	
					5			3
2						6	8	9
				2				
9	5	6						4
7			6					
	3		7					5
1		9	4		2		3	

Difficulty Level ★★

5/29

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

3	2	4	7	1	9	6	5	8
6	7	9	8	4	5	1	2	3
5	8	1	3	2	6	9	7	4
2	9	5	4	6	1	8	3	7
7	1	3	9	5	8	2	4	6
8	4	6	2	7	3	5	9	1
9	6	7	5	8	4	3	1	2
1	3	2	6	9	7	4	8	5
4	5	8	1	3	2	7	6	9

Difficulty Level ★

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Text us your feedback:
inquirer ent name/age/city/message
to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Cool-off period for Dennis and Marjorie

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

WHEN NEWS BROKE OUT about the trial separation of **Dennis Padilla** and **Marjorie Barretto**, my mind went on flashback mode.

I used to hang out with Marj when she and Dennis were still dating. I remember how they fought for their love against all odds. It even reached a point when Marj gave Dennis an ultimatum because he had unresolved issues with a previous partner. He chose Marj.

That was a turning point in their relationship. I found it so sweet that Dennis would refuse to eat if it wasn't Marj who cooked the meal. So she had to hone her culinary skills, all for the love of him.

Hopefully, this cool-off period won't make them both turn cold.

Solo flight

My friends in the band circuit told me that **Rico Blanco** has left Rivermaya. **Bamboo** was also with the band until he decided to go solo. That career move made Bamboo a bigger name in the music biz.

RICO BLANCO

Is Rico out to eclipse Bamboo? Rico is the main songwriter of the band so it will be quite tough for them to carry on without him.

Could it be true that Rivermaya was about to sign an international contract with Warner Music but that Rico declined because the band was no longer his priority? Heard that he quit the band without giving any reason and he now wants to be known as Blanco.

Has the water run dry between Rico and his Rivermaya band mates?

Happiest moment

I have fond memories of my brief stint working with **Toni Gonzaga** in the defunct "ETK." Her bubbly nature and incredible joie de vivre is so contagious even off-cam. Enervon Multivitamins could not have found a better endorser. As the ad's line goes, "More Energy, Mas Happy."

And what's Toni's happiest moment? "When I'm driving the BMW I bought for myself. It's a product of my blood, sweat and tears."

I teased her. "What will it take for you to say yes to a guy who asks you BMW (Be My Wife)?"

She laughed. "It will drive me nuts if and when that moment comes!"

Readers' corner

Ruffa Gutierrez flew to LA with her mom and two kids for some soul-searching. Not soul-mate searching. But based on a reader's search, could there be some truth to the claim that Ruffa married a certain **Richard Daloia** in Las Vegas last 1999? The fan found http://sandgate.co.clark.nv.us/rec.Marriage/marrCert.htm (document number D030366)? The plot thickens…

From egmte@yahoo.com: Hi Dolly! Go to site peoplefinder.com, type DALOIA under last name and R under first name. Click search, scroll down and you will find a DALOIA, RICHARD P. Under his possible relatives is **Sharmaine** (a.ka. Ruffa) and under her name are **Annabelle** and **Eddie Gutierrez**'s names. There must be some connection.

DENNIS and Marjorie Padilla with two of their children

In the tabs, Ruffa neither confirmed nor denied this. Is "Mrs. Turkey" (as **Yilmaz Bektas'** wife) going cold turkey when it comes to interviews about that Daloia guy (who's in the entertainment biz, too, according to his myspace.com account)?

Piolo-Regine starrer

After the long overdue confession of **Ogie Alcasid** about his love affair with **Regine Velasquez**, Ms. Songbird can only bank on her charisma to lure people to watch "Paano Kita Iibigin" (Star Cinema and Viva Films), her movie with **Piolo Pascual**, which opens tomorrow. Shot in picturesque Zambales, the film shows a very different Regine and Piolo at their acting finest.

PIOLO PASCUAL

Malicious rumors questioning Piolo's gender never made a dent in the box-office records of his previous movies. Why should Regine's admission about loving Ogie get in the way of her romantic movie with Piolo?

By now, fans must have learned to accept their idols as persons, not just personalities.

New album

The fastest rapper in the country, GLOC-9 released his 3rd album "Diploma" (Sony BMG). The 14-track all-Tagalog album includes his rare collaboration with **Francis M** and **Chito Miranda** of Parokya ni Edgar ("Lando"), "Lov na Lov" (with **Lovi**), "Blues Niyang Itim" and other hip tunes. Gloc-9 won as Best Rap artist in the Philippine Hip-Hop Music Awards for three straight years. Hip-hop Hooray!

E-mail wateringholeshangri-la@yahoo.com.

World's most watched mom

CHEER FACTOR

MOTHER'S DAY MAY BE over, but there's one mom not to be missed in one of this year's much awaited family events—"The Simpsons Movie."

After 18 years on television, the Simpsons finally make it to the big screen. Here's a peek at Marge Simpsons' (voiced by Julie Kavner) thoughts in anticipation of her family's leap to the silver screen.

If you could peek into a famous actress' fridge, who would you choose and why?

Angelina Jolie. I want to see how many items in the fridge have expired. She thinks she is so perfect. I say prove it!

If you could have any three movie stars over for supper, who would get the invites and what's on the menu?

Britney Spears, Jessica Simpson and Paris Hilton. I'd feed them a piece of my mind about proper behavior for young ladies! Plus, my famous meat loaf.

What are your favorite movie snacks?

Raisinettes are good because they're both candy and fruit. You get the fun of chocolate with all the seriousness of grapes.

With or without butter on your popcorn?

With butter! As Homer always says: "The popcorn is just the delivery system."

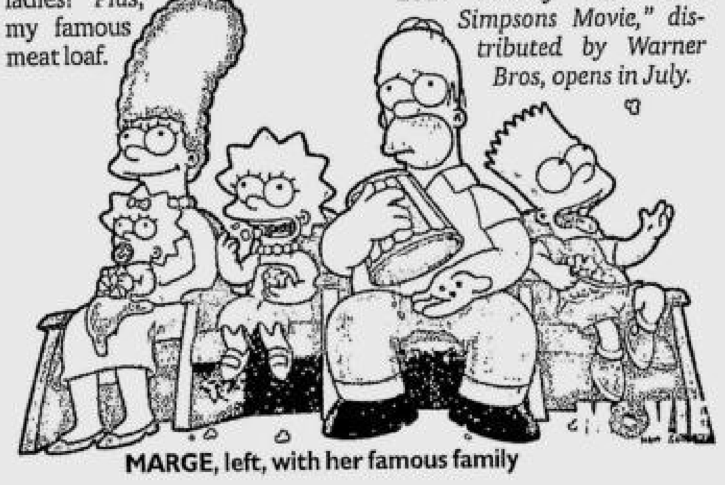
What is your favorite supper to make as a busy mom?

Macaroni and cheese boiled in its own box. It's fast and the cardboard adds fiber.

If your kids ever made you breakfast in bed, what would you like?

French toast, English muffins and Belgian waffles. While we're in fantasy land I might as well experience Europe.

20th Century Fox's "The Simpsons Movie," distributed by Warner Bros, opens in July. ♡



MARGE, left, with her famous family

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS THX

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification please call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 SHREK 3	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	3 SPIDER-MAN 3	4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 SHREK 3	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	3 THX PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 SINEMARS (10:30 am - 12:00 nn) / LUCKY YOU	5 SHREK 3	6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 SHREK 3	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 SHREK 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END		
	3 SHREK 3	4 SHREK 3	5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	3 SHREK 3	4 FIREHOUSE DOG
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	2 SHREK 3		
	3 SPIDER-MAN 3	4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Anson's Exhibit May 15 to 31, 2007	Strawberry Shortcake & Friends: The Big Berry Bake Off May 18 to 20, 2007
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Toastmasters Info Booth at Paseos May 18 to 20, 2007	Piyestang Pinoy: Celebrity Recipes Anniversary Party May 16, 2007

GREENBELT — Greenbelt 2 Dinner Theatre presents: Broadway Showstoppers
May 15 & 22, 2007

Onstage — ONSTAGE - The perfect spot for concerts, stage plays & coporate events is now accepting bookings for May to July 2007
For bookings, pls. call 752-7862 or 757-3861

Ayala MUSEUM — CHINESE DIASPORA: Art Streams from the Mainland (six shows)
Ongoing until May 27, 2007
For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org

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WIN your very own ADVANCE SCREENING of Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer

FANTASTIC 4 RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER

In Ayala Malls Cinemas starting June 13

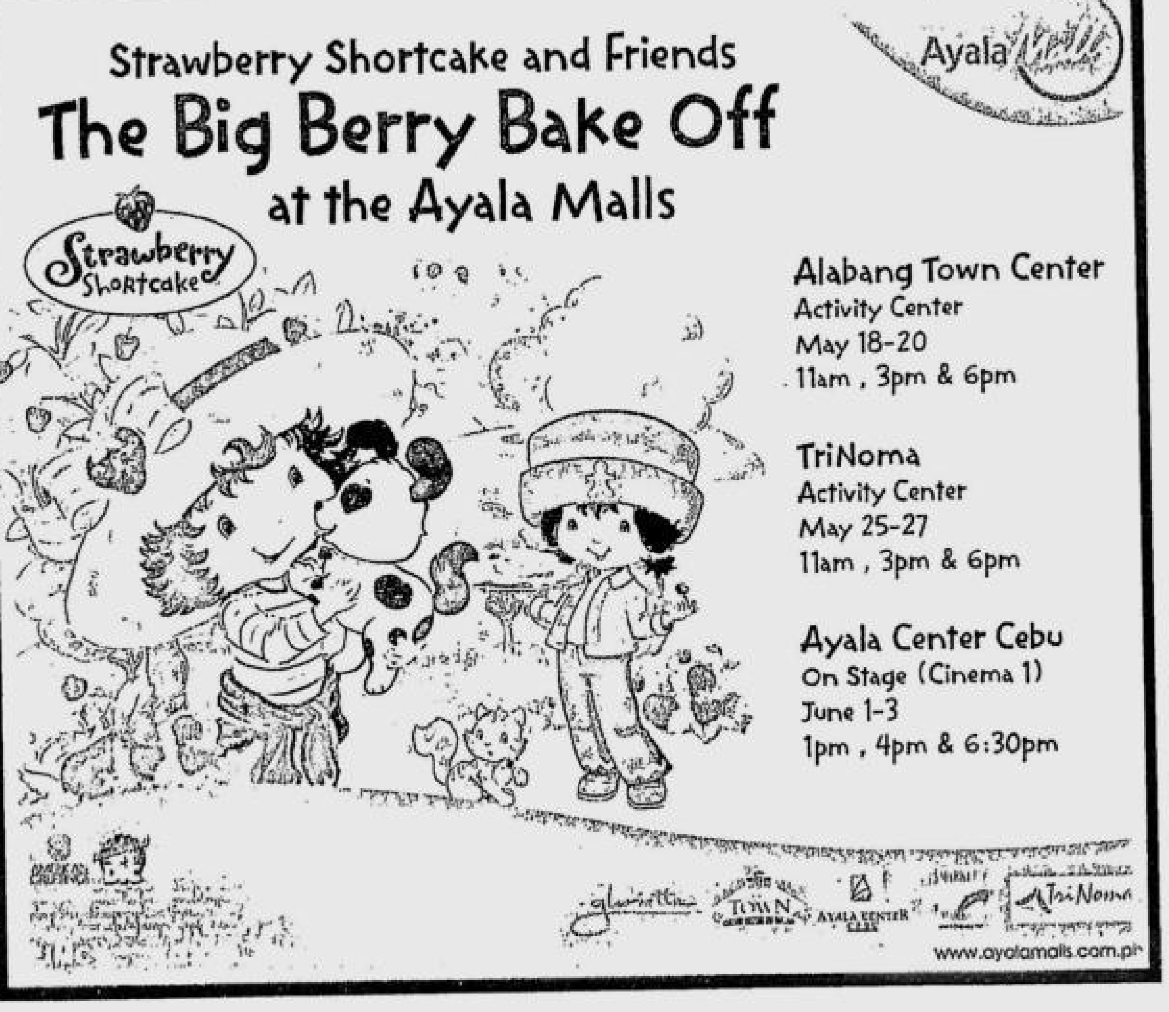
BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW
at the cinema ticketbooths at GLORIETTA 4, GREENBELT 3 & ALABANG TOWN CENTER

And get the chance to win your very own ADVANCE SCREENING of Fantastic 4: Rise of the Silver Surfer for you & your friends at the posh MyCinema at Greenbelt 3!

Plus win Fantastic Four PREMIUM ITEMS!

Promo period: May 25 to June 6, 2007
Raffle Draw Date: June 7, 2007

glorietta GREENBELT TOWN


Strawberry Shortcake and Friends
The Big Berry Bake Off
at the Ayala Malls

Alabang Town Center
Activity Center
May 18-20
11am , 3pm & 6pm

TriNoma
Activity Center
May 25-27
11am , 3pm & 6pm

Ayala Center Cebu
On Stage (Cinema 1)
June 1-3
1pm , 4pm & 6:30pm

www.ayalamalls.com.ph